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*Cambridge, Md.*

No. ....

17<sup>50</sup>

Wright 1837





THE  
VARIOUS WRITINGS  
OF  
CORNELIUS MATHEWS,

EMBRACING

THE MOTLEY BOOK, 1838  
BEHEMOTH, 1839  
THE POLITICIANS, 1840  
POEMS ON MAN IN THE  
REPUBLIC, 1842

WAKONDAH, 1841  
PUFFER HOPKINS, 1842  
MISCELLANIES,  
SELECTIONS FROM ARCTURUS, 1841-2  
INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT,



COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

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NEW YORK:  
HARPER & BROTHERS, 82 CLIFF STREET.

MDCCCLXIII.

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

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THE Author will not deny that he is glad of an opportunity to present the following Writings—the fruits, in part, of a five years' service in Literature—in a connected form. If he has wrought to any purpose, it will appear, he thinks, more clearly now that he is allowed to collect the scattered threads and show them, many-colored, in one woof together. That he has labored with heart and spirit, and with an eye at least upon the paths open to the American writer—will perhaps occur to the reader when he finds himself, at one moment nestling in the very bosom of smooth social life, and at the next hurried abroad through the wilderness to confront the Forest and out-talk the Cataract ; companioned with Prairie Winds and Spectres a thousand years old. If the author had brought no more than an obolus from each province into which he has penetrated, his revenues would be (one might say) a quite sufficient reward. Whether his own steps have been steady and well-chosen or not, he might hope that his foot-prints would not be entirely lost upon such as may journey forth on a similar adventure.

Two courses lie open to the young author, one of which will secure to him repose, good-will, and the tranquillity of a sure, though not always a speedy, oblivion ; the other beset with doubt, clamorous with objection of all kinds, and crowned, it may be, with a triumphant end. He is offered the opportunity of going to school to Nature or to Books. There are innumerable Academies, their doors wide-cast, where he will be welcomed and have promptly allotted to him a form in the class of Historical Novel-writing, Melo-Dramatic Romance, Dutch Humor, or Sentimental Poetry. If he consents to take his place, quietly, under any one of the recognised Masters who preside over these departments, all will go well with him. He shall possess his soul in peace, and enjoy the privileges of good and sober citizenship, undisturbed. Notwithstanding this tempting prospect, it will perhaps be as well for him, if his ear be at all quick at detecting the suggestions and promptings of Nature—to pursue a path of his own, and come to these honors in due course of time. He will find, in obedience to his own heart and a conscientious use of his faculties, a more genial pursuit and a kindlier reward than it is in the power of critical fashion to bestow. That there are peculiar bars raised against him, here,

there cannot be a doubt. A reputation rises with us like the voice of one shouting for help from the midst of breakers and stormy seas. It stands, if it stand at all, a sea-tower that rocks at every heaving of the mighty element which it would fain master and over-awe. From a variety of causes (but chiefly one which will be found urged at sufficient length hereafter), a Good Name in Literature is the least stable of all things that take root in the human Mind in this vast Republican Confederacy. Beyond this nothing can be less clearly defined than the position which good men and bad men should occupy. They are as vague as the shadows of a dream, and interchange, mingle, and part as swiftly. In the great conflict of voices there are none to be heard above the tumult, saying who shall be master and who man. There is scarcely a journal in America of sufficient authority in criticism to have its word taken as a warrant for the investment of a crown-piece. In this sceptreless anarchy the country swarms with Pretenders, Prophets, False Critics, False Men.

Within the past five years the various causes tending to these results have attained a fearful head. The lustrum just past has been the saddest and most humiliating that has ever fallen upon any department of American Industry or Genius. The manna which many, of a too sanguine faith, looked for from Heaven, has fallen at last in a shower of moon-stones, with a copiousness and fierceness that have stunned the prophets and astounded the people. Hardy plants will they be indeed that can lift their heads from beneath entablatures on which their everlasting deadness is written by order of Law. But let no man despair for this. Let whoever can speak and write go on, in the stout heart and hopeful spirit, writing and uttering what Nature teaches. He will not, even in so great a din, be altogether unheard. There is something in the utterance of what she prompts, calm, clear, and true, that—whisper though it be—cuts its way through discords and clamors, like a clear, sharp note to the heart, where it dwells reproachfully, until it urges to a better and higher career.

The problem of a Literature in America—what it shall be, in what forms and to what effect—is too well worth solving, too perplexing and glorious a riddle, to be passed by indifferently by any hand that has ever raised a pen. Many Moroccos and Arragons, with their boastful trains of followers, and false eyes, will ask the favor of the World, before the true Bassanio. Some will seek, like these, to win it in splendor, others to steal upon its affections with a milder beauty, and others again will ask it, in the plainest aspect and garb. Each one will perhaps demand the privilege of moralizing for a while—in a Preface, like the present Author—over his separate chest of supposed treasure in cunning glosses and self-deluding interpretations of the inscription it bears. Each one may advance his claim, and each in turn be rejected as a false and worthless suitor. ♦The only claim the Author makes is that he has been no truer to the soil than the green tree: that is, that he has not shown

himself entirely insensible to the silent influences of Time and Country among which he has grown to be an author at all. Whatever decision awaits these humble labors, he cannot but hope that a cheerful and fruitful hour is at hand. Literature, a patient youth, sits now on the verge of the horizon; in silence and obscurity awaiting the summons to ascend the sky, and become a new dispenser of blessed light to the World. Would that it soon might have and answer such a call, and going up with a steady lustre to the zenith, assume there a post whence its clear bright front and planetary mail, shining at every point, might be discerned, with a new hope, by all true men in all quarters of the Earth!

NEW YORK, *March 1st*, 1843.



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# THE MOTLEY BOOK.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

AN author stands in the portal of a Third Edition, like a prosperous host, smiling a welcome to the public. To have gratified the palate of the readers of former impressions gives him confidence in spreading his table again for another round of customers, and warrants him in the presumption of swinging out a new preface, like a new sign, to catch the eye, and inform those who read as they run, that there is entertainment within for man and woman.

To leave metaphor for the plain level of historical narrative, the author must express his deep sense of the flattering manner in which the *Motley Book* has been heretofore regarded by the public. The kindness with which his earliest effort is received, seizes hold on the heart of the young author, and can never be loosened thence or forgotten: it is then that enemies are hardest and friends most doubtful, when his hopes are at best questionable, and when to question his success or his powers is neither slander nor sacrilege. If the little light which he ventures to set up can be blown out, it accomplishes a double end; proving the power of a malicious critic, and furnishing a clearer firmament for such false orbs to twinkle in as he may be pleased to summon into existence. The present author must be considered, however, as speaking more for the sake of others who may be struggling than for himself, for he has the great satisfaction of adding, that praise has been bestowed by the critics of the *Motley Book* with an open and liberal hand.

In the present edition, the author has amended the work, he believes, by substituting the sketch entitled "*Noadiah Bott*," in place of that which formerly opened the volume.

NEW YORK, October 1, 1839.

## NOADIAH BOTT;

OR,

## ADVENTURES WITH A GOVERNOR AND A WIDOW.

THE two most delightful and exciting pursuits an ordinary citizen can be engaged in, in time of peace, are certainly office-seeking and courting a widow—combining as they do the excitement of bloodshed, and the more animating prospect of quiet and unobstructed plunder.

In the year of our Lord —, it fell to the portion of Noadiah Bott to embark in this double undertaking, with great advantages of mind and person. He was a little corpulent man, slightly

asthmatic, and generally clad in garments about one size too small for his person, which of course gave him very much the appearance of a stuffed penguin promenading for exercise after dinner. Noadiah had derived his knowledge and experience from several professions, for he had been in succession a hardware-merchant, a market-gardener, and a pawn-broker. During his continuance in the first business he had learned a very singular fact in natural history, which gave him a strong prejudice against the traffic in andirons and table-knives—namely: that native rats, particularly the species indigenous to New York, possessed tremendous powers of digestion; for he found they had discovered a passage into his money-drawer, and were in the habit of carrying off, and actually made way with quarter-dollars, half-dollars, sixpences, and sometimes were even so famished as to fasten on husky dry bank-bills, and counterfeit coppers and five-cent pieces. At least, this was the explanation given by an ingenious clerk, and so he broke up his establishment.

Reserving a few spades, rakes, and coulters, from the general sale of his goods, he made his next experiment with a small garden in the suburbs, from which he proposed to raise vegetables for the supply of the city market. Never was such a season known as the one in which Noadiah Bott undertook the management of four acres of kitchen esculents. Tornadoes rushed down from the North and played the devil with his apple and plum-trees; scorching dry zephyrs came sighing and stealing from the South and wilted his asparagus and cabbage. What the tornadoes failed to blow away and the freshets to wash away, was nothing but a heap of dry sand, which would have been very well in the centre of the Arabian Desert, but was rather out of place in a kitchen-garden under actual cultivation. Then he had a left-handed mule, that kept turning the wrong way in the furrow, and who made himself so impracticable and disagreeable that Bott thought he might as well introduce the hippopotamus as a plough-horse at once, and sow his four acres with trade-winds and hurricanes. Besides all this, every thing noxious and pestiferous and destructive was put down in the almanacs for this year. First came an army of locusts, which took quarters on the neighboring trees and fences, and after electrifying Bott for two nights and a day with their pleasant martial music, made an onset, and left

his garden so stripped of leaf, twig, and every green thing, that it looked like a ship with its sails tattered into ribands by a stiff nor'wester. Directly upon the track of this greedy swarm, came a mad dog, that one half the population of the city thought proper, for the sake of their own exercise, and the conservation of the public health, to hunt with great racket and outcry through Bott's garden into a neighboring pond, where the poor animal ended his troubles by committing suicide. Then there were ground-moles and midnight thieves, and the green-worm, and—the Lord knows what else. Poor Bott was almost distracted, and resolved to quit market-gardening for life, and return to town with what small capital remained, and invest it in "dead stock," for as to vegetables, he said "he had no faith in 'em, either as a medicine or a means of living."

Abandoning his lease and making up a wagon-load with old ploughshares, harness, hoes, rakes, and a second-hand bureau, he started for town, and with this miscellaneous stock of trumpery opened a pawn-broker's shop. He was now entirely out of his element, for he had been in the habit of carrying about under his jacket a little piece of curious mechanism which was infinitely more in his way in his present line of business than an idle partner, a bad season, or a dishonest clerk. What could poor Bott do? Dilapidated old men, who had been in the revolutionary war, *would* come to his shop to pledge the very musket that had figured at Yorktown, and the very sword that had cut off the head of a Hessian at Trenton, and how could he refuse to add this to his collection of venerable relics, and just loan a few shillings to the poor old veteran? And then the widow of a sailor that was with Decatur off Algiers, hadn't seen a loaf of bread for the past fortnight, and all she asked was to be saved from starving by a small advance on a model man-of-war that her dear Jack had built when he was at home the last—last time. Every cloak that was left in pledge with him—every rusty beaver, every baby's cap, and every pair of plated candle-sticks, had some little pathetic history connected with it that would have gone to the heart of a stone. So that, after being in business about nine months, Mr. Noadiah Bott had as pretty a collection of good-for-nothing rubbish as an auctioneer could wish to stand over in the dog days. In fact, his shop was a perfect limbo, haunted by the ghosts of cracked fiddles, feeble flutes, disbanded earthen jars, and wine-bottles with holes in their bottoms. With a few old wine-flasks, a curious lizard in a vial, and two or three stout benches, and a train of out-of-the-way utensils clattering at his heels, Noadiah, like a conqueror from a ravaged territory, marched out of the sterile region of pawn-broking, into a more promising field of labor.

He was, therefore, at present, the proprietor of a political tavern, consisting of a bar and fixtures down stairs, and a room, twenty-five by twelve and a half, in the second story, where

meetings were held for the purpose of settling the politics of the ward. It was the business of Bott to light up this apartment once or twice a week; to arrange the platform for a speaker; and, on extraordinary occasions, to embellish it with a wooden eagle perched on a staff or a banner, stretched over an entire side of the room. Sometimes, in the absence of the regular speaker, Bott had been known to mount the platform himself, and puff away at a speech of considerable length and power. Besides these regular duties, he was expected to get an audience together, and, if it fell short, to treat loafers enough till the room was tolerably crowded; to get up all extraordinary rounds of applause, and, finally, to preside over the crackers and beer which are frequently furnished to the democracy at the close of an exciting and thirsty debate. It was a very entertaining spectacle to see Bott on a night of meeting, bustling up and down stairs, now at the bar and now at the ear of some leading politician, commenting on the news from Ohio or North Carolina, or discussing the effects of the new law regulating the size of pint-pots, on the habits of sailors, or some other abstruse and recondite topic. When the business of the meeting had commenced, you might see him every now and then rushing up from the bar-room, and thrusting his corpulent little body in at the mouth of the door, with considerable effort and puissance, as if to ascertain whether the audience were well packed or not.

Bott had kept these quarters for several years. In that time he had grown stout and rubicund, and had formed a large circle of political acquaintance. By dint of listening at the key-holes, when committees and juntas were in session at his house, and by looking grave whenever trifles were discussed, he at length attained such importance in the political world as to venture to invite the Honorable the Corporation of the city to visit, in a body, a remarkable tortoise that had been discovered in his yard, where it had lived twenty-three weeks under a stone, without a particle of food. They accordingly came, headed by his Honor the Mayor, and when there, Bott gravely asserted, before the assembled magistracy of the city, that this identical tortoise had been recently heard, at midnight, when not a soul nor a sound was stirring in the neighborhood, to cry "Bah!" very distinctly, which (Bott whispered to an Alderman, a particular friend of his) certainly portended the dissolution of the Union and the rise of bread-stuffs!

Strengthened by the popularity he deservedly acquired by this bold and sagacious movement, Bott determined to apply to the Governor for a small office. It was some time before he could fix upon one which was suited in all respects to his habits. He had a list of all the offices in the State, from Governor itself down to licensed master sweep, with the salaries or perquisites annexed; and at length he concluded to take the humble station of inspector of staves—twelve

hundred a year. He was getting too corpulent, and this out-door business would bring him down. Besides, the sea-air would be good for his health, for he thought, and so he intended to represent to his Excellency, that drinking so much beer nightly for the good of the party, had somewhat impaired his constitution. Inspector of staves—that was the office; and he must bustle about, bustle about—and move the very foundations of the island but he would have it.

About this time it was that Bott cast an eye of affection upon a black-eyed little widow, whom he discovered one day by chance, sitting in an upper window over a coffin warehouse into which he had made his way to engage a coffin for one of his customers that had fallen down that morning in his bar-room with his glass in his hand. What was very singular about this case of sudden death was, that the man had infused a third more water in his brandy than he was in the habit of using; so that it was a capital question for discussion, whether he had died of cold water or alcohol. After chaffering awhile for the cheapest coffin in the shop (for Bott buried his own customers, and liked to underbid himself), Noadiah set about sounding the proprietor as to the black-eyed lady up-stairs. He began by expressing a profound anxiety as to the health of the coffin-maker's family, and a deep conviction of the manifold benefits of living over the store.

"His own people," the coffin-maker, however, informed him, "lived in a different part of the city. His wife was a woman of weak nerves, and couldn't bear the sight of a coffin, it reminded her so much of her little Bartemus who was dead and gone."

"I haven't the pleasure, then," continued Bott, "of knowing the lady with black eyes, that lives above you. I wonder who she is?"

"Not know her!" exclaimed the coffin-maker, "not know the widow Bobbin—the gayest widow in this city! Why, Mr. Bott, if I wasn't a married man with two small children, I'd soon know who's who, and what's what. I'm often surprised at myself that she hasn't driven me from this melancholy business of coffin-making, into ladies' hair-dressing, or French shoe-making, or some such light and cheerful occupation."

This was enough for Bott. She was unmarried, and just such a gay, joyous soul as he needed to keep his spirits up in these gloomy times. He accordingly went home, buried the poor customer, and made up his mind to marry the widow, and obtain the office of inspector of staves forthwith.

Bott, without difficulty, obtained an introduction, through his friend, the coffin-maker, to Mrs. Bobbin, the gay widow. He found her to be a sly creature, as full of fun as a snuff-box, and, in fact, a woman exactly after his own heart. It is true, she had one child—a boy about thirteen. This was a slight objec-

tion, but the widow prevailed upon Bott to remove it by taking the boy under his own charge, and supplying him with food, lodging, and clothes, with a few quarters' schooling; for the boy, as the widow cunningly insinuated, had a good deal of his mother in him, and it would be a pity to allow so much natural smartness to run to waste. Things advanced so swimmingly, and Bott managed with so much skill, that, before a month was over, he had not only pledged himself to provide for the widow's son, (who, he had by this time discovered, enjoyed a tremendous appetite, wore his pantaloons at the rate of about a pair in a fortnight, and was a little fond of tipping,) but had also engaged the pleasure of the widow's company to the Cartmen's Fancy Ball, to be given in a short time. To make the matter still more pleasing, Bott had the satisfaction of meeting, at the house of the widow, an agreeable gentleman, whom he was delighted to be introduced to, by Mrs. Bobbin, as her "uncle Jonas, from Androscoggin." He seemed to have the same pleasant turn as the widow herself, and was constantly employed, when Bott was present, in saying or doing some amusing thing or other. How could Noadiah be otherwise than happy, while the current ran so sparkling and clear?

In the mean time, he devoted himself assiduously to his application for the inspection of staves. He had a petition drawn up, setting forth his claims and services; his three years' untiring opposition to the other party; his ardent devotion to his duties as retailer of spirits to his political friends; his zeal in gathering audiences and preparing inflammatory handbills, and his declining health, occasioned by these extraordinary labors. With this in his hand, he scoured the city; and, presenting it firmly, he brought every man to a stand as summarily as if it had been a pocket-pistol instead of a petition. His enthusiasm was considerably quickened when he learned that a competitor was out before him, and had a start of twenty-seven names.

Besides signatures to his petition, Bott rushed hither and thither, obtaining letters recommendatory from every person of note or standing who had the slightest claim of acquaintance with his Excellency, the Governor of the State. Among others, he procured an invaluable and pressing epistle of recommendation from a gentleman who had enjoyed the extreme felicity of beholding the skirts of his Excellency's coat, as he passed through Onondaga county, during a violent storm.

The day had, at length, arrived, the evening of which was to be signalized by the celebration of the Cartmen's Fancy Ball; and Bott was hurrying through his political toils, in order to be in good time to wait on the widow. With this view he was making rapid progress past a certain market on the East River side, when his eye caught a crowd. Now, a crowd was a perfect harvest to Bott, and he had scarcely ever plunged into one without bring-

ing out one or two first-rate names to his paper. The widow would be impatient, he feared; and, though the temptation was great, he determined to hurry by, when he beheld a distinguished functionary, whose name would be an all-important acquisition. He accordingly resolved to run the risk, and make up lost time by additional speed in his after-movements.

"Your signature, if you please," cried Bott, pushing boldly through the crowd, toward the Coroner (for it was that officer, preparing to hold an inquest), whose ruddy countenance was a conspicuous beacon for the office-seeker. As Noadiah rushed forward, the crowd, supposing him to be some near relative of the deceased, come to take possession of his chattels and moveable funds, parted; and, just as he had succeeded in breaking the inner circle, the Coroner stepped aside, and Mr. Noadiah Bott found himself presenting his petition to an upright corpse with a most doleful countenance, and a faded blue handkerchief about its neck.

"Get his name, by all means, Bott," said the Coroner, whose office, after he had held it three months, had, somehow or other, made him remarkably facetious. "To him, Bott, to him; he can say a good word for you in the next world, though he plays dummy in this."

"The poor gentleman," cried a voice in the crowd, to several of whom Bott seemed known, "has been down drinking your health, Mr. Bott, in salt water, and success to your application."

"Look in the defunct's pockets, Mr. Coroner," urged a second voice; "p'raps he's got a petition up for surveyor-general of sharks and codfish."

"More likely," said a third, "a special bill, for privilege to bathe in the docks below the lamp district."

"No such thing," retorted the first citizen; "I'll bet he's a quack-doctor, been in to try a new pill that he's been inventing to keep water out of the stomach."

"Come, gentlemen," said the Coroner, "the corpse begins to look melancholy. We must have a jury on the poor fellow, whoever he is; and Mr. Bott, you will make a good foreman, and I've no doubt, if you render a true verdict, provided the poor man can serve you by a good word with the devil, he'll do it with all his heart."

Bott entreated his friend the Coroner to excuse him from service. The Coroner discovered his extreme urgency—was inexorable, and the inquest proceeded. The body was laid at full length on the top of a fish-stall, and the jury took their seats on market-benches on each side. With a word or two from the Coroner, they proceeded to examine witnesses, as to the manner of death of the gentleman in the faded blue handkerchief. The first that was produced was an old fishmonger, who looked as dry and withered as a salted haddock:—

"It was about two o'clock, he guessed, it mought be more, or it mought be less, for he

recollected there was a little blast of cloud just over the sun—when what should he see but the dead one there walking, melancholy-like, up and down the wharf (as true as he lived), with a piece of rope and the tail of a dried herring—(herrings was now a shilling the dozen; if the season set in earlier, it mought so be they would be down to nine-pence ha'penny)—sticking, for all the world, out of his coat pocket behind. He guessed at once, and without help, the moment he got sight of the herring and the rope-end, that something was wrong with the poor gentleman's head. He's loose in the attic, thinks I; but how he'll use that rope to any advantage, with this high wind, I can't guess. If he tries a spile, he's sure to be interrupted unpleasantly; and if he goes into the market and gets possession of a hook, why, some butcher or other'll come nex morning, and be offended mightily at the liberty he's took. 'What will the poor gentleman do?' says I, almost in convulsions to see how he was put out, as he rambled up and down the wharf, looking one time on the ground and then gazing up at the mast-heads, and then stopping, and taking a melancholy view in a basket at some fresh black-fish, just out of the water. This put him in a doleful train; and what does he do next, but makes right down to the river, all of a sudden, and spoils his herring and rope's-end, and his own dear body, by jumping straight into the tide."

An idle fellow, a sort of wharf vagabond, was next produced, to furnish his evidence as to the mode of death of the deceased. All that he could testify to was, that he differed from the first witness; for that the herring and the rope, according to his best belief, were in different pockets: that the herring was in the right pocket, and the rope's-end in the left. This witness was followed by a match-spirit, another river loafer, who was "as sure as veal was dead calf, that the rope's-end was in the right pocket, and the bit of herring in the left." This brought out his predecessor, and a furious altercation sprang up between the two minute and accurate observers, as to the particular depository of the fish and cord. They battled it out for some time without interruption, when, being ordered off by the Coroner, they, in a very gentlemanly spirit, locked arms, and marched away together to a neighboring porter-house, there to discuss the question over a pot of pale ale, and, after an hour's enthusiastic debate, to come to the conclusion that they were both right, and that "that old curmudgeon, the fishmonger, had parboiled (perjured) himself."

Bott, all this time, was suffering under the most hideous state of feeling. Time was flying; the sun was down; the widow must, by this, be dressed; she had put on her hat; in a rage she had torn out of the house, and gone to the ball alone! This was the masterly picture that Bott's mind painted for its own amusement, while he sat at the head of the corpse.

All the customary evidence had been examined, and a pretty palpable case of self-drowning was made out; when who should rush forward, to increase his discomfiture, but half a dozen medical worthies, in breathless haste, panting, and covered with sweat. They all eagerly approached the body, felt its temples, its wrists, and its ankles, with the most affectionate tenderness, and unanimously pronounced it—dead! Here was a discovery for the Coroner and jury. The corpse was decided to be a corpse; but, as all their names could not appear in the next morning's report, the Coroner allowed a couple of them to unbutton the jacket of the corpse, put their fingers in its mouth, and hand their names to his clerk.

Bott was now allowed to escape, and, choosing the most direct route, started for home. He had successfully accomplished several blocks, when he heard a tremendous noise, resembling the approach of a furious army, the bursting of a volcano, or the thunder of a cataract; it was a New York fire engine. With a horrible uproar, dragged forward by a hundred men, and with a tail of boys—black, white, and piebald—as long as that of a comet, it rushed on. It neared the place where Bott was hurrying along; it approached a cross-walk that Bott must pass to the opposite side of the street. He undertook to achieve it before the engine came up; but, mistaking his time, he was caught in the current and hurried along. He had got entangled in the rope at the head of the machine, and it was under such headway that he must go with it, or be trodden under foot, and furnish a mournful casualty or melancholy accident for next day's papers. It was a dreadful situation for a gentleman of a rather corpulent habit, and slightly asthmatic!

He entreated the foreman to put his trumpet to his mouth and stop the engine; he offered him two shillings if he would do it—a new hat, his watch! It was all in vain; you might as well attempt to arrest the progress of a herd of buffaloes on the prairie; and they swept on—one long block, two, three. At length they came to a square, where there was a large heap of dirt; and chance accomplished what a new beaver hat, a watch, and the amazing sum of twenty-five cents, had failed to do—it arrested the engine; and Bott, with his hair almost on end with fear and anxiety, disengaged himself, and, retracing his steps at a hard gallop, reached his own door.

Composing his spirits with one glass, he proceeded to arrange his toilet in another; and at last stood, in full trim, before the widow's door. With trembling hand he knocked, and was answered. She had gone to the ball an hour before, with her uncle Jonas, from Androscoggin. "The devil take uncle Jonas! (and heaven be thanked it's no worse!)" thought Noadiah; and he speeded to the scene of festivity.

Bott soon arrived at a large room, lighted with mould candles; and from a box, in the

centre of which, where a negro and five white men, like so many captive Troubadours of the feudal time, were imprisoned for the evening, proceeded certain instrumental sounds, of a very spirited and melodious character. On the floor thereof he discovered, besides the customary number of well-dressed ladies, about one hundred and fifty men, apparently in the enjoyment of robust health, and endued in cartmen's frocks, every soul of them. This was the Cartmen's Fancy Ball—the fancy of the thing lying entirely in the frocks. After he had somewhat recovered from the dazzling effect of the refulgent mould-candles, and the gorgeous apparel of the gentlemen, so that he could look about with tolerable composure, nearly the first object his eye fell upon, was—as true as Bott wore a ruffle!—uncle Jonas, of Androscoggin, clad also in a cart-frock, and dancing away, at a very vigorous rate, with the widow. They appeared to be enjoying themselves charmingly; and Noadiah thought he had never seen, in his whole life, a more affectionate uncle, or a more delightful niece. He, however, advanced into the centre of the room, where he was stared at by the frocked gentry as if he had been a Turk in a turban, or a Mohawk in his blanket, and accosted the worthy pair.

The widow playfully rebuked him for his tardiness and irregularity, adding, with a sly look at her partner, that "uncle Jonas had been so kind as to drop in and wait upon her, in his absence, with the ticket he (Bott) had left." She added, in a whisper in Bott's ear—"Uncle Jonas is one of the best men living; and, to tell you the truth, Bott, it's the remarkable resemblance between yourself and him, that made me take such a liking to you."

At this, Bott laughed in his sleeve, and uncle Jonas, who somehow or other had overheard the substance of the whisper, roared right out. Bott glanced stealthily at uncle Jonas, very often, throughout the evening, and satisfied his own mind that he was one of the best looking men it had ever been his happiness to behold.

The fancy ball proceeded merrily; and every time the hundred and fifty male dancers jumped up and cut a pigeon's wing, or struck their heels in the air, they made a noise with their cart-frocks like the sails of a whole fleet of merchant-ships flapping in the wind. But what astonished Bott most, in the career of their proceedings, was, that although he was extremely anxious to dance with the widow Bobbin, yet, by some marvellous combination of circumstances, he was deprived of that pleasure through the whole evening; and what was, if possible, still more miraculous, uncle Jonas, by equal good luck, seemed to dance every individual cotillon with that lady. Sometimes he was pleasantly requested by the widow to bring her a lemonade from the saloon; and before he could return, she was engaged, and dancing in high spirits with her respected re-

lative. Then he would be courteously entreated, by one of the managers, to snuff a chandelier, as his frock was in the way, and he was afraid of a general conflagration if he attempted it. Then a polite invitation would be sent down from the musicians' box, requesting Mr. Bott to come up the ladder, and give the orchestra his opinion on the rumble of the drum, and to pronounce whether it wasn't a trifle too harsh for the ears of the very genteel company below. In this way the evening glided by, without giving Bott an opportunity to distinguish himself on the floor; till, just as the ball was about to break up, Mrs. Bobbin prevailed upon him to exhibit himself in a sailor's hornpipe, in which, she slyly informed the company, he was a most capital hand. A ring was accordingly formed by the rest of the assembled gentry, and Bott executed a hornpipe in most brilliant and comic style; in fact, his performance was so pregnant with humorous motions of the leg and swayings of the person, that, at the conclusion, a general complimentary laugh was raised for Bott's especial benefit.

Upon the whole, Bott was pleased, and his pleasure was increased by uncle Jonas informing him that he must go another way, and that he (Bott) must see the widow home. Bott readily accepted the agreeable trust, innocently (and like the primeval Adam, before the days of omnibuses and licensed hacks) forgetting the coach-hire. A hack was therefore called, and Noadiah and the widow, bidding uncle Jonas good-night, mounted in—the widow giving Bott the back seat, and taking the forward one herself, remarking, that she preferred riding backwards, she had been in the habit of rowing so much on a pond, when a girl. During their progress through the streets, Bott observed that the widow every now and then looked just over the top of his hat, and smiled; but he didn't observe that uncle Jonas was standing up behind the carriage, and making numerous pleasant signals and indications (now and then tapping his forehead significantly) to Mrs. Bobbin through the coach window. Having deposited the widow and discharged the hack, (for he preferred to walk home, and chew the cud of amorous fancy at leisure,) about three o'clock that morning Noadiah stretched himself to pleasant dreams!

The inspection of staves now engrossed a large portion of the thoughts of the sagacious Bott, and he left no influence unasked, and no politician unannoyed, but that he would obtain the office. He was, by this time, in possession of the autographs of more than fifty important and respectable men, twenty tolerably great men, and twelve actually great men, that expected to be members of Congress, before they yielded the ghost. To strengthen his claim, and bring himself more prominently before the party, he resolved to abandon the comparatively private theatre where he had heretofore performed, and exhibit on a larger stage—in a word, he determined to make a speech at Ma-

sonic Hall, which bears the same relation to the political taverns of the wards, as a prime's cathedral does to the little chapels connected with it. After forming this resolution, Noadiah strenuously devoted himself to the perusal of the newspapers, and the orations of Patrick Henry, as given in the "American Speaker," and to the practice and cultivation of his voice by a strict regimen of table-beer and lozenges. In accordance with his design he prepared an elaborate speech, beginning, "Fellow-citizens, unaccustomed as I am to public assemblies"—and ending with an ecstatic description of the "blood-stained Genius of Liberty, wrapped in a winding-sheet of stripes and stars"—which was a tolerable figure, considering that Bott had no interest in an incorporated cemetery, and was not a tailor by trade.

The eventful evening having at length arrived, Bott disposed of an early tea, and ascended to the public room up stairs, and locked himself in with a tumbler of brandy-and-water, and a fourth-size tallow candle, having given strict orders to Master Bobbin to cry "fire!" if any one attempted to interrupt him. He then recited his harangue, from beginning to end, with great vigor addressing a group of large barrels that stood in a corner, as his "fellow-citizens," and a small barrel on his right hand, with "Old Rum" branded on it, as "Mr. Chairman."

Master Bobbin (although, like a true son of New York, strongly disposed so to do) had no occasion to cry "fire," and if the non-interruption of Mr. Bott's speech was to be taken as evidence of no conflagration, any company might have ensured all the property, as far as his voice could be heard, with perfect safety, and at a very trifling premium. Having gone through his speech to his own perfect satisfaction, and without any symptoms of animation having manifested themselves either in the brandy-keg or the sturdy group of barrels, Mr. Bott descended, endued his stout little person in a rough over-coat with tremendous pearl buttons, and thrusting his manuscript speech in his hind-pocket, sallied forth. It was a clear, moon-light evening. Bott was in capital spirits, and he dropped into a cellar and took a couple of dozen of York Bank oysters, just to strengthen his voice. He had not gone far, however, (reciting to himself favorite passages from his harangue,) when he was unconsciously followed by a slight youthful figure, which glided cautiously behind him, took a peep into his face, and extending its right arm, withdrew from the pocket of Bott a white roll which, in all human probability, contained the speech of the evening. The purloiner then stole off, and turning a corner, halted a moment under a lamp, opened the roll, laughed quietly, and then made way for a political club or association of the opposite party to Bott's, and there finding a numerous assembly of choice spirits gathered, he regaled them with the recitation of the able and eloquent harangue of Noadiah (or Noddy, as the reader took the liberty of calling him) Bott, Esq.,

which you may be sure was interrupted with frequent exclamations like these—"Well done, Bott!" "Good, for the inspector of staves!" "Equal to fifth-proof with five-fifths water!"

In the mean time the hilarious and innocent Noadiah was wending joyously toward the scene of his glory, stopping now and then, however, when he was reminded by a hydrant, or some other upright and stationary object, of an attentive listener, to get into the shadow of the buildings and recite some striking passage with appropriate extension of arms, contracting of brows, and planting of the foot.

An immense crowd had assembled; the meeting was called to order; a Chairman and seventeen Assistant Chairmen (to help the presiding officer look grave) were appointed, and five or six speakers, ranging from three feet and a half to six feet high, and from twenty years of age to seventy, with every variety of voice, from the kettle-drum to the fife, addressed the audience—and Bott listened to them all, sometimes pleased that his own time had not arrived, and sometimes eager to take the platform at once.

At length the cry of "Bott!" "Bott!" was heard rising from different quarters of the room, (for certain vagabond friends of his, there by his special invitation, were on the alert,) and swelling into a perfect tempest of acclamation, Bott came forward, aided in the rear by two or three sturdy scamps, and helped in the van by a couple of the secretaries, who seized him forcibly by the collar and drew him forward.

"Three cheers for Bott!" shouted one of his vagabond friends the moment his nose became visible as he assumed the stand. Three cheers were accordingly given, and Bott began. Through the first half-dozen sentences of his harangue he marched in triumphant style, keeping his eye fixed keenly on a bald-headed man in about the centre of the crowd, to steady his nerves—when suddenly the bald-headed man, prompted by a current of air that came in at a broken pane, clapped on his hat, and Bott stopped short as if he had been struck with the apoplexy. "Go on!" was the universal cry. But Bott had lost his self-possession, and stared around like a frightened rabbit, first at the Chairman, then at each one of the seventeen Assistant Chairmen, then into the bottom of his hat, and then he thought of his manuscript. A smile gleamed over his face, and he thrust his hand behind him, found nothing, brought it back again, and the sickly smile went out. At last he stammered—"Beer three cents a glass—nutmeg extra—no trust in this shop"—and he was hurried off the stage by the two benevolent secretaries who had dragged him on by the collar.

Recovering himself from the shock as well as he might, and making his way through the press as speedily as possible, he rushed into the open air and aimed at once for the widow's. There he was sure to find one respectful auditor at least, and ample consolation for the miscarriage of his oratory.

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To his utter and unqualified astonishment, he was there informed that the widow had gone out with her uncle an hour before, and wasn't expected back in a week! What could this mean? His mind was filled with dreadful forebodings—horrible surmises! It could not be that they had left home to drown themselves together? that they had gone out to fight a promiscuous duel because the widow had seen fit to show more partiality and affection for him than for her own uncle? that they had ascended the top of the shot-tower to study astronomy for a short time, and then to plunge for ever from its dizzy height? Notwithstanding these conflicting conjectures, Noadiah went straight home, and immediately examined the Table of Consanguinity in the Bible, to ascertain whether uncle and niece were within marriageable degree.

Next morning's paper explained the whole matter in the most artless manner. It was neither drowning, murder, nor aerial precipitation—but simply matrimony. The announcement set forth the parties as Jonas Tupp, cartman, and Mrs. Amelia Bobbin, "both of this city." The relationship appeared to have been perfectly imaginary—a merely playful hypothesis.

As to the inspection of staves, it was considered so far beneath Bott's dignity and the worth of his services as to be given to one Zachias Bull, or Bullwinkle, or some such zoological fellow; and Bott was informed by private letter that his application had been hotly opposed by his very good friend, the Alderman who had tendered his invitation to the Common Council to visit a remarkable tortoise twenty-three weeks under a stone, &c., on the ground that said invitation (the most serious operation of Bott's life) was a deliberate imposition, as he was satisfied, on the understanding of the Honorable the Corporation!

## POTTERS' FIELD.

I STAND upon the graves of the poor. Over this simple field, unvaried by mark or monument, I cast my eye and feel the power and presence of death more than in the tombs of kings, or standing beside those huge mausoleums, the pyramids. Here the grim phantom stalks naked; not skulking as in the cemeteries of the rich and prosperous, behind funeral piles, or stealing away from the gaze amid masses of carved marble. Every step of the tyrant falls clear and distinct upon the grave of some lowly son of earth and poverty. How many of the children of sorrow have tottered into this humble burial-place, and thrown down the weary burden of grief and wretchedness under which they had fainted in the sun.

All-accordant must be the trumpet-blast that can melt into one harmonious web of life these motley elements. What a pageant of wretch-



edness, and rags, and penury would the habitants of this single acre form, could they be summoned from their rest. Moscow's bell should ring to raise the awful curtain, and bring upon the stage the parti-colored company.

An archangel's peal alone could startle back into life, (from which their suffering was so deep and piercing,) the various multitude. An omnipotent edict in truth it would require to force them once more upon a scene where anguish and tears were their only legacy, and the grave—the quiet, rent-free grave, their reversion!

Many as the citizens that people the bottom of the deep, are the myriads that have sunk silently as into an ocean billow, into the bosom of this green earth. I will try a simple spell of my own: perchance it may bring them up, at least in phantasy.

"Re-appear, ye sad tenants of the narrow house, once more on the earth where ye suffered! I here establish a court of death. Ye are summoned to the trial; answer ye to your names. Hear ye! hear ye!"

"Saul Rope? Saul Rope?" Slowly from the earth, near at my feet, a pale, shrunken being shakes off the green mould, and feebly aiding himself with his hand on his grave's side, steps into the twilight.

His dress is an entire suit of gray, coarse linsey-woolsey, with a plain, cheap hat, without nap or buckle. "I was a saw-filer," said the poor apparition, "and kept a small shop in Doyer street. When I set up there I had a few friends at first, but they soon dropped off. The street was so crooked that nobody could find their way to me, even if they wanted my services; no one except an old bachelor with a twist in his neck, who seemed to have a natural facility in threading the windings of the alley, and who came not on business, but to enjoy my pleasant conversation! Besides, a middle-aged lady, who was born in the street, and who had a praiseworthy fondness for her place of nativity, and who visited me annually the day before Christmas, to have her carving-knife put in order for the holidays. By-and-by the old lady died off—the bachelor bought a little farm and retired into the country, and I was forced to abandon my thankless trade of saw-filing and go upon the watch. Of a feeble frame, I soon caught a cold, fell into a galloping consumption, and you see me here. Thank God! there was no wife nor little child to weep the day that the simple saw-filer died."

The next dead defendant was a corpulent, hale fellow, who answered to the name of Robert Drum, and was clad in tattered and ragged garments, without hat, shirt, or boots, whose story in brief was, that "he had been a beggar, and had died of good-living and repletion."

After him Peter Packhorse and family were called. At first no one appeared, but on a repetition of the summons, a small middle-aged man was seen making his way from a remote part of the field, with a sickly woman hanging on his right arm, and a train of twelve or thir-

teen thinly clad, pale girls and boys following them.

The tale of Peter's distresses was touching and pathetic.

"Upon the banks of the sunny Bronx, in the sweet and cheerful village of White Plains," said Peter, "God cast my lot. I owned a few patrimonial acres, and in my early youth took to myself a buxom and bonny wife, and together we made a little Paradise of our farm, for every thing was abundant and in good order. The seasons were our friends, and the clear stream that ran by our door kept us close to our home by its cheerful voice and its ever delightful, rippling music. In summer I gathered in my harvest, with my first-born boy and girl at play between the swatches and winrows, and when the autumn came, and the winter was provided for, I would take my gun or my angle in my hand, and strolling away into the rich crimson woods or along the mossy streams, meditate upon the bounties and blessings Heaven had given me in my fertile farm, my bonny wife, and my sweet-featured boy and girl. Thus three joyous years glided by, and prosperity made me a Christian in the open fields, and a devout worshipper in the church. — On the last day of the winter of —, a cousin of mine, a black-browed, thoughtful man, arrived in the mail coach from the city on a visit of friendship. He stayed little more than a week, but made so good use of his time, as to persuade me to sell my farm, turn it into cash, and, carrying my family with me, settle in New York, and become a broker—a sorry shaver of notes. The profits that he conjured up before me seemed so rapid and sure, the business so light, airy, and gentleman-like, (who is it that has never been fired with the passion of becoming a gentleman!) that I fell in with his proposition, and early in spring, disposing of my farm and stock at vendue, hastened to town. Here I soon lost the better half of my ready cash; my dark-browed city cousin absconded with the balance, and I, with a family which had doubled, was upon the town. In a short time, even my darling children (yes, the bright fairy boy and girl of my country days too!) were snatched from me by an envious fever, and I was alone with my wife in the vast city without bread. I obtained employment, precarious and cheap employment it was, as a journeyman shoemaker: for every farmer in the parts where I was born knows something of the trade. Thus I sustained myself for a few years, a new family of children having sprung up and died at my side in the mean time. My wife followed her thirteenth child, (a pretty, lovely girl!) My staff of life was broken. The trade at which I toiled bent me double, and in the ninth year after I had left that little Eden on the banks of the Bronx, a disease of the spine fastened upon me. I lay sick for months, in a low, vile shed, racked by intolerable pain of body, and worse anguish of mind, until I died and came here to lie with my wife and children in everlasting rest! I would



that a river ran by our graves—something like the Bronx!"

I could hardly refrain from tears at the recital of Peter's simple story, but mastering my emotion, and turning my face toward another quarter of the field, I cited—

"Paula Hops?"—At this summons, a light female form, endued in a black bombazine gown, with a white vandyke about the neck, stepped out of her grave upon the earth, with something of natural grace in her gesture, and gave the following history of herself.

"I am a poor seamstress," said the fair vision, a hectic glow shining through her pale cheek, and a doubtful brilliancy kindling her eye, "I was born to that vocation. My mother and grandmother before me were seamstresses, and lived in comfort and plenty; but that was in different times from these. Tailors did not ride in carriages then, that poor girls might starve.

"Their labor was at least worth the candle they burned far into the night to pursue it by; but I do them wrong, they never burned the midnight lamp. Their hours were at the worst from sunrise to sunset. I toiled often from the first streak of morning till the neighboring clock tolled twelve at midnight, or one on the morning of the next day. And see! this is my reward—these are the wages for which I wasted my young blood, health, and spirits, and finally my life!" and saying this, she took from her bosom and handed me a soiled and crumpled paper, containing the following particulars:

"SEAMSTRESSES' PRICES:—Six hours work on a common vest, six and a quarter cents. Twenty-four hours work on Baboon coats of kersey, fifty cents. Twelve hours work on Navy shirts with star-collars, twelve and a half cents. Two days work on blanket coats with fourteen buttons, fifty cents. Frocktees of duffle-cloth for stout-bodied men, twenty-four hours labor, thirty-seven and a half cents. Pantaloons with fly fronts and straps, eleven hours, twenty-five cents, &c."

And leaving this guilty and barbarous catalogue in my hands, the fair victim disappeared.

Next, I called up in succession and heard the elegiac histories of poor Joe Crutch, an old pauper, with a red bandanna about his head; Susan and Sarah Sparkels, a pair of spinster sisters, withered and sad, who came up arm-in-arm, as if they occupied a joint grave; Sam Weatherly, a paralytic poultry-merchant; Moll or Mary Jones, huckster; two red-faced butchers that died of apoplexy within a day of each other (the old co-partnership), Bull and Bullock; a pauper negro, Nick Johnson; five or six sickly-looking, crook-backed wood-sawyers; Quibble, a rusty attorney, with the dirty end of a declaration in covenant sticking out of his breeches' pocket, &c., &c.

"Call into Court!" I exclaimed, in a voice of command, to a feeble old crier of the Common Pleas, that had appeared (privilege of his former office) without summons to tell his tale

of wo—"Call into Court all those that have died of harsh usage and broken hearts!" and, feeble as was the voice of the tottering beadle, at his summons an innumerable company of haggard creatures started up and swarmed in every part of Potters' Field. A countless throng of faces was before me, men, women, and children—but all of them wearing a certain proof of the deep anguish that had cut to the heart and brought them to the grave. Who knew their malady, as they pined away day by day, like fruits that perish internally, and drop from the tree without seeming frost or blight? None! not one!

Some of them died off abruptly—others lingered along for months, and a few, to whom nature had furnished stout masculine hearts, weathered it for a year or two; and then the undertaker (such a one as poverty could afford) was called in; the hearse stood at the door; the neighbors' children gathered wonderingly about the house and walk; a few of the better-hearted neighbors dropped in; more of them looked out at their windows, or put their caps together and discussed the dead one's disease—some calling it pleurisy, and some, nearer the truth, an affection of the heart, but none, not one, (unless some single sister or shrewd aunt that lived with the poor family,) dreaming it was that terrible and crushing form of the disease—a broken heart. Thus the poor-house train passes from the door; the corpse in its plain pine-coffin is deposited in the grave; and henceforth the dead is dead to all the earth! There is nothing by which to remember the poor that are gone! It is only over them as a multitude, whose combined sorrows and sufferings assume to the fancy a huge and dreadful aspect, that any one mourns.

As individuals, while living, none cares for them but death;—dead, none regards them but God!

## GREASY PETERSON.

SMOOTH, unctuous, fish-faced being! that sit-est duck-like, perched on the oil-barrel's edge, ready to make a plunge into the sea of business that roars at thy feet—Calmness personified, holy Peace, Placidity, and Quiet descended to earth in the guise of a green-grocer! Greasy Peterson, vulgar mortals have named thee, knowing not the true sweetness and blessedness of thy life in its even flow. Judged by thy garments, thou art in truth a poor devil. A blue coat patched like the sky with spots of cloudy black, oil-spotted drab breeches, cased in coarse overalls of bagging, are not the vestments in which worldly greatness clothes itself, or worldly wisdom is willing to be seen walking streets and highways. True, thou hast a jolly person and goodly estate of flesh and blood under such habiliments. Glide on, glide on, Oleaginous Robert—like a river of oil, and be

thy taper of life quenched silently as pure spermaceti!

Robert Peterson, Esq., green-grocer and tallow-chandler, possessed the most incongruous face that ever adorned the head of mortal.

His nose thrust itself out, a huge promontory of flesh, at whose base two pool-like eyes sparkled small, clear, and twinkling, while a river of mouth ran athwart its extreme projection, flowing almost from ear to ear, with only a narrow strip of ruddy cheek intervening.

Within, greasy Bob possessed a mind as curiously assorted as his countenance. It was composed of fragments of every thing, bits of knowledge of one kind and another strangely stitched together, and forming an odd patch-work brain, whose operations it was a merry spectacle to observe.

"Good morning, neighbor Peterson," said a small, snipe-nosed fruiterer from next door, "Good morning!—I hope we shall have fine weather now the wind has shifted his tail to the Nor'-west."

"Hopes it may be so, Mr. Tart—the stars were precious clear last night, the sky was a healthy red this morning—and farmer Veal brought in his poultry to be ready for sale by noon. I hope the bank will give me a lift to day, for I didn't know but we should lose our little girl last night—with the measles; she was sickly, very sickly. Perhaps peaches are cheap now? aren't they, Mr. Tart? How is the little widow, Mr. Tart? I bought a firkin prime butter Wednesday afternoon, Mr. Tart, only one and six per pound. That dress of the young parson's is horrid taste, bright buttons and rainbow-colored neckerchief!" And so Mr. Peterson would ramble on by the hour, touching on every imaginable subject, exhausting none, adorning all by a placid and inimitable face, and a peculiar, emphatic, jerking delivery. It is calculated by an acute and accurate neighbor of his, (a patent astronomical instrument-maker,) that in one day Greasy Peterson touched on one hundred and twenty-three distinct subjects without devoting more than two seconds and a quarter of remark to any one.

There was a flavor of this same grotesque humor in every thing that he said or did.

The store in which he carried on trade presented the same parti-colored confusion and variety as his conversation. It was a congregation of an infinite diversity of wares and merchandises; a piebald assemblage of boxes, candles, loaves, dried fish, fresh fish, green cabbage, red roses in pots in the window, scales, antique hatchets, pyramidal and cone-shaped loaves of sugar in blue-paper caps, cinnamons and cloves in flaunting frocks of yellow, and Greasy Peterson, presiding in the midst, mounted on keg or counter, like a Turkish Muezzin, in a rusty cocked beaver.

The outside of this singular edifice answered aptly to the interior. Originally it was a low stone building, with a tile roof, occupied as a powder-house, with small square windows, pro-

tected by iron gratings. About the twentieth year of the present century the tile roof had been shattered by a heavy thunder-clap, and for a time the little powder-house remained tenantless, unless the landlord chose to collect his rent from a ghost in goggle eyes that was said to occupy the premises. In the year twenty-five (I think it was) it fell into the hands of Mr. Peterson, who immediately set about converting it into a store and dwelling. The first step in this important undertaking was, to build upon the stone-work that had survived the storm, an upper story and attic of wood; and when this was completed, the innocent little powder-house looked very much like a stiff old maid that has weathered half a dozen changes of fashion, and chooses to wear an under-gown of the last century, topped with a boddice and head-dress of the newest gloss.

Next, the windows were enlarged in length and breadth, the bars removed, and a noisy pair of shutters given to each.

But the finishing-stroke remained. The fantastic tenement was yet to be painted, and here the riant humor of Mr. Robert Peterson broke away from rein and bridle, and fairly galloped off with all the plain sense of the worthy chandler. He entered into contracts with no less than six painters for the painting and ornamenting of his new-fangled edifice, believing that no less a number could furnish a sufficient assortment of colors. And to each one of the six he gave special directions as to the compounding of novel and unheard-of varieties of tint.

And now that Peterson's powder-house has left the brush of six painters, it shines upon the adjacent streets, a many-colored meteor! rivaling the sky itself in the brilliancy and variety of its tints. It is sunset imbodied in stone and wood, only with new and greater accessions of gorgeous hue. An enormous dot of paint, as it were, planted at the corner, saying, "Stop here!" A vasty exclamation-mark of red and blue and yellow, dashed down at the junction of the streets, demanding the wayfarer's pause, and the wagoner's mounted admiration.

As in a hero everything is (or should be) heroic, so, as I have before noted, every thing connected with the worthy green-grocer assumed some color of the humorous.

The eleventh year from his opening store and establishing his family in the powder-house, Mr. Peterson, by dint of large profits and small expenditures, was able to set up a snug equipage for family use. This was a light vehicle with a green leather cover, extending over the whole length, so that it resembled an airy market wagon, fixed upon high stout springs, and containing four seats within. Drawn by a single, sleek, shining nag of very moderate size and stature, the Peterson family were accustomed to visit certain kindred of theirs living at Pelham and West Farms. It was a rare sight to see them setting forth from the front-door of their gaudy dwelling: in front sat Greasy Peterson himself, smiling in a new sky-blue coat. With

bright buttons, tightly fastened up to his chin, light plush pantaloons, and an unctuous face and a pair of buckskin gloves; the whole person surmounted by a glossy black beaver hat; driving his way forward with considerable speed, by the aid of sundry encouraging chirrups and admonitory, "Ge-ups," and "Get-a-longs." By the side of him was discovered the slim, upright form of Robert Peterson, jr., his eldest son, holding a black-handled coach-whip in his hand, with which he greeted, in the progress of travel, innumerable vagrant curs, that hailed him open-mouthed at the doors by which they passed. On the seat immediately behind these two worthies sat Messrs. Eliphalet and Bildad Peterson, holding transverse across their breasts a child white and slim as if cast in a candle-mould, recently baptized Thalia, (softened by the same monsters that christened her sire "Greasy,") into Tallow Peterson. On the next seat rearward were disposed two interesting children in calico frocks—Moses and Johnny Peterson, and supporting the uttermost rear reposed Mrs. Sophia Peterson, the corpulent spouse of Robert, and Sophia Peterson, jr., a girl with a large head and beautiful set of delicate small teeth.

With this burden behind him, the little nag ambled on quietly and in good cheer, although the vehicle that he drew was elevated so high above him, that the tenants of the wagon and the sleek horse, seemed to belong to altogether different planets. Their return from these visits was still more grotesque, for their family-carriage generally trundled into town garnished with baskets of fresh, sweet-scented apples, and a pair or two of tender poultry, presented by the kindly farmer friends whom they had visited, hanging at the sides, enlivened at times by a gay string of onions, or an ambitious head of cabbage.

If I were called upon to name the prevailing characteristic of Mr. Peterson's mind, I should say, with deference to better judgments, it was a certain, practical, business shrewdness, that never allowed itself to slumber or to be overreached. Whenever trade was the subject, or bargain the object of conversation, all the incoherence I have spoken of disappeared, and his mind flowed forth in a quiet, steady stream of plain good sense and useful knowledge. Those outward limbs and flourishes were instantly lopped off by the exacting knife of business and gain, and the simple, unadorned trunk of the matter stood disencumbered. Many are the prime bargains Peterson has entrapped unwary boatmen and butter-merchants into, by help of his rude garments and vagabond presentment.

"How much do you ask a pound for these firkins, squire?" asked Greasy Peterson one day, dressed in his roughest suit of clothes, and a hat with only half a rim.

"Why, loafer," replied the captain of the loop, to whom this question was addressed in slouching, careless tone, "why uncle oily-reeches, I guess *you* may have it at six pence a pound the lot."

"I'll take it, sir!" said Greasy Peterson, throwing an air of considerable seriousness and dignity into his remark, which startled the rash butter-merchant slightly.

"But mind ye, neighbor—it's cash down at that price! Come, fork over the solid, Old Rags," said the boatman, with a loud laugh, and turning with a quizzical leer to a group of captains, and sloop-boys that had gathered to see the fun.

"Here it is!" responded Peterson, coolly, taking out a dirty buckskin bag, and counting down in hard silver the sum to which the twenty-five firkins of butter amounted; ordered the whole upon a cart, and jumping on himself, touched his hat very politely, and bade the astounded crew of boatmen, "Good afternoon!"

The rash captain lives to this day, and indulges in a curious half-laugh, when he is engaged in bargaining, that is known along the wharves as the famous *Greasy Peterson chuckle*.

About the forty-third year of his age, the worthy grocer was visited by apoplexy which dried up his vital juices, and withered his person like an apple blown from the tree, nipped by autumn frosts. The physicians straightway hurried in, and bled him so freely, that the fresh gloss and old smoothness departed from his countenance, and left him a sorry spectacle compared with the former galliard and jovial creature that answered to his name. He however recovered so far in a few weeks as to be able to hobble out towards noon, and plant himself on a stool, on the sunny side of his store, to air his constitution, and receive the congratulations and good wishes of his friends and neighbors as they passed or paused awhile to inquire more minutely after his health. In a short time (despite his careful diet and the skillful practice of his physicians), a second and heavier stroke of the disease fell upon him and carried him off, at two o'clock in the afternoon of the same day on which the celebrated fat ox, Billy Lambert, arrived in town.

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## THE ADVENTURES OF SOL. CLARION.

GENTLE, charitable, benevolent reader! if thou feelest disposed to aid thine author in a sore perplexity, and to dispense unto him, out of the abundance of thy geographical erudition, permit him to address to thee (humbly confessing his manifold ignorance) a single interrogatory: *Where is the city of Peth?* Many times have I journeyed along the highway, that runs through Greenwich, in the state of Connecticut, and heard some learned traveller that rode with me say, "Yonder is the city of Peth!" pointing to the northeast: and looking thither, I have discovered nought but a common hill-side, with a single low tenement feebly sustaining itself amid a score of rocks, and three or four straggling apple-trees.

Nevertheless in that illustrious city, wherever it be, the city of Peth, of whose inhabitants the country doggerel says—

"Half ran away, and half starved to death,"

did the equally illustrious Solomon Clarion find a dwelling-place.

Humanity never assumed a more joyous and gladsome form than thine, blithe Sol. Clarion! Ah! why didst thou leave the tumbling hay-mow, and the fresh stream, to become a pilgrim to this Babel of ours? Why didst thou abandon the festal company of rustic youths and maidens, to mingle with the tide of dark or care-worn faces that flows through our streets?

In his earliest prime, young Clarion lost his mother (a golden woman—full of the delicacies and rich fruits that belong to her sex, dashed with something of a wilder savor), and was brought to yonder poor dwelling to be a house-mate with his mother's parents.

Young Solomon's character soon developed itself, and proved to be of a mingled yarn. None was gayer at school or in the orchard at play than he: and yet, at times, none was sadder or more thoughtful.

Some holydays he passed in merry game and wild frolic with his little school companions, others he spent far away in the woods, or wandering through the green meadows, or loitering slowly by the babbling brook. It was Solomon Clarion (that fear-nought boy) that rode the wild colts, and ran at the heels of every mad bull that roared in the county! It was Solomon Clarion that was caught in an attitude of breathless and reverential regard, watching the glorious sunset or the stars climbing the sky!

In front of his grandfather's dwelling, and by the road-side, stood a dry, dead old cherry-tree, which had been barren of fruitage for many years. It had been planted by a quaint old bachelor uncle, and was considered a precious family relic; and as such, Sol. himself regarded it until one day, a clear April holyday, in a gamesome mood he doomed its overthrow. Gathering a noisy band of school-fellows, he issued his warrant against old uncle Cherry (the name by which it was known throughout the neighborhood), and, producing a coil of rope, ascended the tree, and fixed a halter round its mossy old neck. At a signal the boys gave a hearty pull (none heartier than Clarion!) and, with a clamorous shout, it fell to the earth. In a moment or two Solomon was missing, and his comrades, after considerable search, discovered him over the fence, with tears in his eyes, sliding a fragment of the mouldering bark of old uncle Cherry thoughtfully into his pocket. So strange a creature was Clarion!

Sol's chosen friend and boon companion, was a simple fellow by the name of Will Robin—or Foolish Will, as he was better known, and whose general character, although brightened and improved by occasional flashes of wit and shrewdness, justified the epithet. He was the butt and target of all the boors for twenty miles

around. If any farmer, or farmer's son, or serving-man, wished to be witty at the very cheapest rate and smallest possible expenditure of thought, no better luck could betide him than to chance upon foolish Will. If a gallant was anxious to obtain the reputation of vast facetiousness and great brilliancy of intellect with his mistress, his fortune could be no sooner made than by having poor Robin drop in to have a few small, innocent jests thrust into his pin-cushion brain without reply.

But Solomon Clarion found better matter and better services in Will than these. He saw in the poor varlet concealed veins of feeling and odd streaks of fancy, checkering what the world considered his vacant heart and blank intellect. He saw in him innocence and purity, a sense of love, and a deep sense of attachment wasted (unless some human being like himself chose to garner them for the simple owner) on dogs, and birds, and horses, and others of the thoughtless tribe.

Conversation with Will, too, though sadly strange and disjointed, occasionally let the light in, as it were through the chinks of a disordered brain, upon curious trains and passages of thought. At times, he garnished his remarks unconsciously with rare conceits that might have gained for a wiser man the reputation of a bountiful wit.

"As true as I'm Will Robin," he exclaimed, one clear, fair evening, as they were returning together through a meadow, from a long summer's day ramble, "yonder's Preacher Purdy's new white beaver hat—nailed up by the rim—Look!"

Sol. Clarion gazed in the direction to which he pointed, and answered, "Why, Will, I see nothing where you point but the plain, old moon in her first quarter."

"You may well call her plain," replied Will, catching a new thread of thought; "if it be the moon (I'm not clear on that point yet), she is the only decent planet in the sky. *She* behaves something like, and keeps up a good bright light when it's wanted, and is dressed in good, homely, clean linen in the bargain; while your fiery old sun capers up and down in crimson velvet, making everybody lecherous and apoplectic—I don't care who knows it."

"It's Preacher Purdy's hat, is it, Will?" said Clarion, anxious to bring him back to his original suggestion, and to see what he would make of it.

"Yes, it *is* Preacher Purdy's hat, I'm sure of that; for don't I see the woolly nap on it now I look closer"—clapping his hand, folded like a telescope, to his eye, and watching as two or three fleecy clouds crossed the disc of the planet—"what a beautiful wren-house and place for swallows and martens! I wish my little flock of blue-coated beauties had as good quarters—it's softer and nicer than an old black hat. But the preacher'll have to go bare-headed to meeting next sabbath—that'll be funny!" And poor Will burst into a boisterous roar of laughter,

in which Sol. was forced to join, for the sake of good fellowship.

In all Sol. Clarion's jovial doings and merry-makings, Foolish Will was a faithful squire and attendant; and, simple as was the brain of the strange creature, it always had sufficient sagacity to comprehend the drift and purpose of a joke of Sol's., and to furnish its little tribute of suggestions to help it forward. One day (it was Sunday, in June), it came into Sol. Clarion's head to make a pilgrimage, with rod and line, to Rye Pond or Lake Westchester, some five or six miles distant from his home. He lay under an apple-tree, cogitating some method of safe and easy conveyance, when Foolish Will, in one of his wild capers, came rolling down the hill into the orchard, and directly against the ribs of the thoughtful Solomon.

"Heigho!" cried he, "this is a new style of salutation on a Sunday morning. I have full confidence, Will, in your affection, without these heavy tokens. Be pleased to take off your carcass, and give me a comfortable morsel of advice."

"Advice! Sol., if you want that, it is but a stone's-throw to friend Bloom's, and he has enough to turn his own mill and some over for his neighbors. That's a fine owl of a fellow, his oldest son—I'm sure of that, Solomon!" and he twisted his face as nearly into an outline of the bird's visnomy, as his smooth features would allow.

"Never mind Booby Bloom, Will," continued Clarion, "I'm bent for a fishing excursion to-day."

"And want me to hang on, as a poor worm, for a bait I suppose;" and an altogether unnecessary tear filled the eye of the gentle-hearted fool.

"No, no, Will, not for that," returned Solomon, in a persuasive accent. "No, Willie, you must borrow some good neighbor's horse and wagon and ride with me."

"Black snakes and tree-toads take me if I will," exclaimed poor Robin, "I'll ride without loan or purchase. There's old Bloom's black nag running at large in the woods; all the family's away to meeting, save blind Dick and deaf aunt Sally. Come, I'll bring down gran'father's rusty saddle, and we'll mount and shog off. Come," he concluded, taking Clarion by the hand, and drawing him up from his recumbent position, "come, Master Solomon, it's the best thing we can do." And so Master Solomon seemed to think too, for he leaped up, ran into the house, and in a trice brought forth a dusty demipique saddle and broken bridle, which latter he handed to Foolish Will. They soon reached the woods together, the black nag was speedily caparisoned, and they were on their way to the Pond.

That was a delicious day to the soul of Sol. Clarion. Grave joys, if I may so speak, and pleasing sadness blended together, and steeped him in a stream of pure delight. Nature on the one side opened her fair page, and on the other

side sat Will Robin, a most rare and queer commentator, turning all things into fantastic shapes, and startling the woods and the waters with fancies never before heard. Before Sol., as he sat upon a jutting rock embowered in trees, the cheek of the sweet pond swelled with the curve and fulness of beauty itself; kissed by forest shadows, that here and there fell like carresses from the waving trees. Now and then a stray duck started out from the shore, and flew, like a silent thought, to an opposite quarter of the lake; or a water-snake slipped, from its sunny covert on the margin, back into its native element. Afar the meadows stretched and swelled into gentle hills, which lay basking in the sun, with an ox or horse now and then stealing quietly across the landscape. Behind them (the Prince of Darkness must have a foothold somewhere!) Bloom's black nag is tethered in the bushes, munching a handful of fresh clover.

"See yonder thick-skinned philosopher!" said Will Robin, pointing to an old turtle that had perched himself upon a rock in the middle of the pond, "I suppose he has mounted that dry pulpit to hold forth to his watery congregation. D'ye know Solomon (Master Solomon, I mean), that I sometimes think that these turtles are evil spirits, that haunt ponds and marshes, in the same way as bad men run up and down the world with wicked designs. That fellow's like a watchman in his box, that I've heard tell of in the city, he sees everybody, but no one (unless the great Jehovah) can see the workings and twistings of his ugly face in his shell. I believe that vile turtle yonder *is* Satan," concluded Will, his eyes gleaming with supernatural light, and his frame trembling with some sudden fear suggested by the allusion, "for I saw him snap a poor sinner of a fly in his jaws; and now see he's going to bear him down with him to hell—to hell—to hell!" And poor Robin mumbled the last phrase over and over, as the turtle glided slowly from the rock and disappeared. About sunset they returned home, and loosed the black nag in the woods from which they had taken him.

The next morning, just after breakfast, a man about forty-five years of age presented himself at the door in a brown, quaker-cut coat, low shoes, and a pair of loose, gray pantaloons, that flaunted about his ankles. Furthermore, he had a short nose, and a broad-brimmed hat, from underneath which a stiff, bristling shock of hair spread out over his coat-collar like the tail of a young wren.

"A good morning to thee, my friends," said this personage, through his short organ, "and a very good morning to thee, my young friend, after that pleasant ride of thine on the Lord's day, and on a stolen horse!"

These latter words were more particularly addressed to our friend Solomon, who sat on a bench at the feet of the old people, his grandfather and grandmother. Clarion blushed, and the old people turned pale at the heinous and

diabolical charge. They were so completely astounded, that they sat silent.

"My young friend," continued Mr. Bloom, giving a not very amicable look at Solomon, "I'll tell thee what, I will not put thee in the White Plains' jail this time, but I will give thee some wholesome advice." Perhaps Sol. Clarion would have chosen the jail rather than the advice; but Friend Bloom gave him no option, and proceeded: "Abandon that crack-brain William Robin to his fate; go to thy school many more times than thou dost; spend thy holidays nearer at home; and ride not my black mare to the Pond without my permission." He then addressed a solemn chapter of advice and admonition to Sol's. grandfather and grandmother, and wiping the corner of his mouth with his coat-sleeve, placidly disappeared through the same door that introduced him to the reader.

Solomon Clarion was now fast verging toward manhood. In a few days, he would be entitled (besides a moderate sum of ready money) to enter upon whatever right he possessed in a small cante of property (three or four acres, with a house) that his mother had bequeathed to him. An uncle of Solomon's—this was the present situation of the property—had purchased or paid a mortgage upon it given by Mrs. Clarion, and taken possession and enjoyed it ever since her death, upon that barren title. Possession he still maintained, and refused to hold any conversation with young Clarion on the subject. A neighboring farmer, into whose land the acres in question made an awkward elbow, was anxious to buy Solomon's title, and dispossess the unlawful occupant. In this perplexity, Sol. thought he would have recourse to a legal gentleman whom he had heard Will Robin often mention. This was Lawyer Doublet, a strange old man, some fourscore years old who lived upon the road, not far from the city of Peth; and upon him he resolved to call.

Accordingly, one morning about a week before his minority expired, Solomon set out, in company with Will, for the residence of Counsellor Peter Doublet. In a short time, they reached an ancient-looking stone house; and, poor Robin knocking at the door, and inquiring for the legal genius of the place, they were ushered up stairs: and here Clarion was introduced by his friend Will to Lawyer Doublet, and was particularly struck with his appearance. As that venerable advocate rose and came forward with a very graceful bow to welcome them, he presented to Sol's. eye a well-preserved model of mortality, with a flowing white wig, like that in the portraits of Sir Isaac Newton, curling over his shoulders; a black velvet coat, with silver buttons, and skirts stiffened with buckram, covering a very moderate set of limbs; a scarlet vest beneath the same; a set of white small clothes joining black silk hose, and shoes with huge silver buckles.

The personal history of this antique-looking member of the bar dwelt under a haze of considerable obscurity. It was rumored that he

had taken an active part on the royalist side during the revolutionary war, and now lived upon a pension which he received from the king's coffers. He still preserved and strictly maintained the vesture and habits of the last century, and obstinately refused to lay aside the smallest tittle or thread of his dress, or to abate a single jot of the severity of ancient manners. In truth, he was a creature of past times. The best part of his life had lain in the eighteenth century, and he was, in a manner, a trespasser upon the territory of the nineteenth. All his thoughts and feelings dated back forty years. He saw every object through time's telescope inverted. The books that he read and quoted, the cogitations that he cogitated, the opinions he delivered, were all musty with age.

The apartment into which Clarion had been introduced was in character with its curious proprietor. From the windows hung old damask curtains, with gold-lace borders, which permitted a mild twilight to creep through the room, part of which fell upon an ancient case of books fastened against the opposite wall. Every volume was black with years. Behind a little low table, strown with pieces of parchment, silver-hilted pens, and curious old pipes and snuff-boxes, stood a high-backed chair with a red leather cushion, ornamented with a pair of raised cock-pheasants fighting a duel under an oak-branch similarly executed, and striving to pick each other's eyes out: a very happy illustration of the benefits of sprightly litigation!

When the whole party was seated, Sol. Clarion briefly opened his case, and stated his strong desire to sell the land to Farmer Bull, who had offered a fair price: mentioning at the same time Farmer Bull's reluctance to pay a very large sum for making and drawing the deed, and his own unwillingness to become a party to an ejection suit against his uncle.

"I see the remedy, Mr. Clarion," said Lawyer Doublet, rising under considerable excitement, and pacing to and fro between his high-backed chair and the window; "I see it, sir, as clear as a plea in chancery with twelve branches!"

"And pray what is it, if you please, sir?" asked Solomon, in breathless expectation.

"Nothing less, sir, than livery of seisin!" and he looked earnestly into Clarion's face, expecting, no doubt, to see it brighten with joy at this fortunate and profound suggestion.

"Will that cost much?" inquired Sol. Clarion.

"No, sir; a mere trifle. It is the cheapest, and plainest, and wisest, and noblest, &c., &c. process ever devised by brain of man for conveyance of lands!—If I knew the author of it, my young friend, I would plant his bust up there: and you, my good old king"—addressing himself to a bronze head of George II., standing on the top of his book-case—"you would have to tramp!—when the sage comes up, the king goes down," Mr. Clarion, as the Baker's broadside of 1790 hath it."

"Yes," humbly suggested Poor Will, "'and ten to one both have a cracked crown.' Your sage addres his in attempting to stuff it too full of reading, and your king breaks his in attempting to stretch it larger!" and Will burst into a hearty laugh, while Sol. Clarion smiled.

This sally, however, was not quite so well received by Counsellor Doublet, who assumed a portentous look of professional consequence; and thrusting his hands into his hinder coat-pockets, strided up and down the room, rebuking the unfortunate Robin for his audacity in trying wits with Peter Doublet, Esquire, counsellor, who had Touchstone at his finger's end, and was so profoundly read in the Twelve Tables, as to sometimes believe himself to have been one of the framers of the same.

Will apologised humbly (Clarion aiding him), and they relapsed into business.

"I will prepare the papers that are necessary between yourself, Mr. Clarion, and Mr. Obed Bull," continued Counsellor Doublet, with more gravity and weight of manner than he had at first exhibited, "and next Wednesday (I think Tuesday is your twenty-first birthday, Mr. Clarion?" Clarion nodded acknowledgment), "next Wednesday morning we will ride to the property, myself and you, Mr. Clarion, and Mr. Bull; and this poor creature may go with us; perhaps he may minister some trifling service: and there we will deliver possession by livery of seisin under the old law (the d—I taking, if he please, lease and release, and such modern traps and tricks of pettifoggers)."

An hour was named for the parties to assemble at the house of Lawyer Doublet; Clarion and Will Robin arose to depart, and with them rose the counsellor himself, and opening the door, he heralded the way down stairs, unfastened the front-door, and, standing uncovered upon the stone porch, he bowed twice or thrice, and ceremoniously bade Solomon Clarion "a good day—with God's blessing!"

Promptly at the appointed hour, Sol. Clarion, on a bright bay horse, borrowed from a neighbor, and Foolish Will Robin on a rough colt, obtained in a similar manner, wheeled up to the door of Lawyer Doublet. In a short time, the counsellor came forth, dressed as we have described him, with the additional personal ornaments of a sword at his side, with a silver hilt, a cocked hat, fringed with gold lace, on his head, and a blue bag, containing his papers and documents, under his arm. As he stepped from the porch, a high, raw-boned steed, of a mixed sorrel complexion, was brought up, tricked out in an antique martingale, old double bits, a horse-cover in the style of the revolution, and a saddle about fifty years old. With the aid of Foolish Will, Counsellor Doublet, having carefully attached the blue bag to the saddle-bows, mounted into the broad shovel-stirrups, and being in a few minutes joined by Mr. Obed Bull, in a buff coat, the party set out for the scene of action, which was about three miles up the road. They formed a gallant spectacle for

the dames of King street, as they galloped along. Each moment a head was thrust out from some shrewd post of observation, and some new face broadened with wonder at beholding Counsellor Doublet riding between Bull and Clarion, the representative and memento of times that they had heard grandsires and old women only speak of. The rustics in the field paused in their labor, and leaned upon their rakes or plough-tails to gaze with dilating eyes. The horses turned their heads in the furrow and stared; the oxen licked their hairy cheeks in admiration; and it was said, with some show of truth, that a tin pigeon, acting as weather-cock on Farmer Barley's farm, wheeled about on its pivot, in spite of the wind, and rolled its painted eye-balls and shook its painted tail in wonder and astonishment.

It was a glorious day in mid-August; serene, tranquil, beautiful. The sky was without spot or wrinkle of cloud on its clear, blue surface. On each side of the road tall pear-trees stood, swarming with rich, ripe fruit; near every house lay an orchard, enamelled with countless colored apples, red, green, damask, yellow, and white, of every kind. In one field that they passed, half a dozen fresh-looking countrymen were at work laying the stout grass upon the ground, like files of proud soldiers, gay with green feathers flaunting in the wind in the morning—at eve to be dry and withered. In a neighboring meadow, a sportsman in a fustian hunting-coat, and white hat, with shot-pouch, powder-flask, and gun, was creeping along the fence to obtain a shot at a meadow-lark sitting on a rock in the middle of the meadow. He steals closer and closer. In a moment, the merry-maker of the skies will lie stretched on the cold stone. *Peal-it! peal-it! peal-it!* is the sound issuing from a stout throat in yonder tree. It is the cry of a sentinel lark, and that is his watchtower. His winged brother takes notice, and in a twinkling curves far along the air, beyond the reach of gun or sportsman.

Away the four horsemen gallop; Will Robin dropping a little in the rear, to dismount and catch a woodchuck, which was perambulating a fence by way of exercise, after a hearty meal of clover.

This enterprise is nipped in the bud by Sol. Clarion's falling back with poor Robin, and asking what he was slipping out of his saddle for.

"It's our duty, Master Sol., to look after the belly," said Will, "and I was thinking that woo'chuck, which has nothing to do, now that he's taken his breakfast, but to be cooked would make a nice pie for supper when we got home."

Foolish Will's anxiety about provender was very soon allayed, by Clarion's announcing to him that they expected to dine at Farmer Bull's as they returned, and that a fat young turkey was in preparation. Will's eye sparkled at the savory announcement, and they speedily regained their places in the cavalcade.



On a scaffold in front of a weather-beaten, yellow farm-house which they passed, a gay party of travelling carpenters were at work. There is something charming to the fancy in the strolling life of these country Chips. They ramble about pleasant villages and country places—your only modern Amphions and Troubadours—singing their cheerful catches, and building as they sing. Half a dozen choice journeymen cluster together, and form a merry crew, plying the chisel and mallet in rural neighborhoods; repairing, like these, some time-worn farm-house, or raising up in more bustling parts a snug cottage, to be the harbor of happy spirits for many blooming and fragrant years, or like a flock of piping swallows chirping about a breach in the roof of some venerable old church. Now and then bandying a jest with the plump kitchen-wench (it matters not whether she be black or white—they will have their joke!), or indulging in a sly innuendo among themselves at the expense of the blushing, young-married couple, whose home they are finishing. Everywhere, too, they are regaled with grateful viands—healthful breakfasts—hearty dinners—genial suppers; “We must have something good,” says the housewife, “for to-morrow the carpenters are coming!”

Shortly after they had passed this jovial company of workmen, they reached a small wooden house, with a dry, dull aspect, as if it had been pelted with all the winds and weathers of half a century, without the defence of paint or color of any kind. It stood upon a knoll facing the north, and had a solitary, lonely appearance, as they came upon it. In front was a small courtyard with barn-yard and poultry-yard blended with it, and tying their horses to the rough bar-fence that surrounded it, they all dismounted, and entered a clumsy gate, which opened into the enclosure, except Foolish Will, who, under a direction from Counsellor Peter, scampered off up the road. The counsellor then unhooked his blue bag from its place at the saddle-bows, and hugging it under his right arm, marched with great solemnity up to the door of the house, accompanied by Bull in a buff coat, and Clarion in green pantaloons. Here he planted himself upon the steps leading to the same, and laying down his cocked hat and blue bag with great deliberation upon a neighboring bench, he stood erect and surveyed the three acres and a half of arable land to be conveyed to Obed Bull, farmer, with monstrous complacency and inward satisfaction. In a few minutes, Will Robin came dashing down the highway with great expedition and heat, and announced to Counsellor Doublet that “none was to be got!” meaning that he could obtain no persons to attend the important ceremonies about to take place, as witnesses. “Then off your horse,” cried out Mr. Peter Doublet in an ecstasy of authority, “blow this vile tin horn!—that will make our proceedings public—and, perhaps, answer as well!” At this behest, Foolish Will dismounted, and seizing the abject

piece of metal, sounded a dozen or two of round blasts; and in answer, one lazy-looking young negro was brought out of the fields (mistaking it innocently for the dinner-blast, although it was now only about ten in the morning), and a limping old farmer from across the way, who came hobbling into the yard, staring at Lawyer Doublet as if he had been a genuine phantom in a velvet coat, flowing wig, and white small-clothes. Fortunately, there was no one in the house, or they would have been brought down upon the party in a twinkling by this uproarious summons: the barbarous uncle of Clarion being some distance down the road, helping a farmer get in his hay, and the lazy-looking negro boy alone having charge in his absence. “Now we will proceed to livery of seisin, as settled in *Madox and Craig*!” said Peter Doublet, fumbling in his blue bag, “and first, I will read in the presence of these many good witnesses the warrant of attorney, whereby I am empowered to fulfil feoffment of this house and land.” And saying this, he recited, in a good old-man’s voice, the contents of a paper which he had disinterred from its azure sepulchre, containing power, authority, warrant, &c., to convey said house and land in the name and stead of Solomon Clarion, of the city of Peth, to Obed Bull, of King street; and then, drawing forth a second paper from the same blue receptacle, he proceeded to declare the contents thereof—describing the tenement, with all the appurtenances, standing thus and thus, and the lands belonging to the same, running with this brook, and under that tree, with a white flint-stone at its extreme corner.

He then said, descending from his elevation, “Neighbors and witnesses! leave these grounds, while I do deliver seisin and possession of the same to worthy Obed Bull!”—and, after they had retired into the road, and stood looking over the fence at the further progress of this interesting ceremony, he continued, plucking up a huge clod in his hand, “Mr. Obed Bull, I do hereby, in the name and by the authority and attorney’s warrant of Solomon Clarion, deliver to thee seisin and possession of these lands, and all rights thereto appertaining, as described in the within deed.”

At this precise stage of their proceedings, Mr. Uriah Bloom, the short-nosed Quaker, chanced that way on a rusty-gray nag, and, wheeling up to the fence, turned about in his saddle, with a face wonderfully full of a magnanimous pity, and portentous of a very speedy discharge of comment and denunciation.

“Why friend Obed Bull,” said he, through his short organ, “I did not truly expect to see thee, a man of much worldly sense and uprightness, engaged in this heathenish folly, with that old white-wigged, silly-pated tory, Peter Doublet! Thou knowest better, Obed, thou knowest better! But I will leave thee to thine own practices, and punishments sequent thereon!” Saying this he turned and cantered at considerable speed on his journey down the road. Not



more than five minutes had elapsed before the broad-brimmed hat and short nose of the quaker again came in view, hurrying back with an additional rider behind him on the rusty, gray nag. When the face of this new actor made itself visible, it struck considerable alarm in the bosom of Will Robin, and Mr. Solomon Clarion. It was the barbarous uncle. The approaching steed, thus doubly freighted, was however hidden by the house from the gaze of Mr. Obed Bull and Counsellor Doublet; which latter worthy was proceeding with great vigor in the process of livery of seisin.

He had again mounted the stone steps, searched the house to find whether it was wholly empty, and fit for delivery, and laying his hand upon the iron hasp of the door, exclaimed, "I do hereby, in the name, and by the warrant of Solomon Clarion, deliver to thee, Obed Bull, seisin and possession of this house and all unto it that appertains! Enter into this tenement and God give thee joy of it." At that moment a large red rooster who had stood a long time upon the barn-yard fence, in patient expectation of a hearing, and who seemed inclined to perform the part of clerk in these services, opened his throat and made the responses to Counsellor Doublet, in a clear, audible voice: Mr. Obed Bull seized the hasp, opened the door, and had just thrust his foreleg across the threshold to enter, when, lo! he was met full in the face by the barbarous uncle (unlawful occupant of the premises), with a stout oak cudgel in his hand, who dealt the said Obed Bull, donee, &c., several very hearty tokens of admiration of the conduct he had pursued in purchasing said land, and obtaining livery of seisin as aforesaid. "I'll give your liver-a' seasoning—you lout!" cried the barbarous uncle, as he plied the flail. "I'll mark your title down in black and white!" and he dealt him a sore blow over the bridge of the nose. By this time Mr. Obed Bull had evaded the cudgel, and the next object that fell into the clutches of the barbarous uncle was Peter Doublet, Esquire, who in consequence of his age, was not ribroasted and bastinadoed after the fashion of Mr. Bull, but was taken by the collar of his velvet coat, and quietly kicked through the garden-gate into the road. Meanwhile Friend Bloom had found his way silently into the front room of the tenement, and half opening a window shutter, looked cautiously on the scene; his short nose and broad-brimmed hat being skillfully concealed in the shadow of the shutter. The barbarous uncle tossed Doublet's gold-laced cocked hat over the fence, with the blue bag. The Counsellor picking up the former, and placing it upon his head, and Foolish Will gathering the scattered papers and parchments and thrusting them into the latter, the party mounted their horses (Mr. Bull with great difficulty), and turned their heads expeditiously homeward. They had not travelled far, however, in this direction, before they slightly slackened their pace, and Mr. Peter Doublet muttered, "By the head of King George,

and the Pandects of Justinian! Mr. Clarion, I'll have revenge and satisfaction on that scurvy uncle of thine before the week wanes! yea will I!" and he struck his sorrel a smart blow across the foreshoulder, "I'll to the Supreme Court of Justice at once, and attach him with a mandamus writ of privilege!" The little lawyer hereupon lifted his cocked hat from his head, and, carefully shaking the dust from its border, replaced it with an air of much dignity, in its original position. Then turning upon Sol. Clarion, he asked in a tone of surprise, as if it had just crossed his mind, "Why, Mr. Clarion, didst thou not come to our rescue? being young and strong sinewed we might have justly looked aidment and reinforcement from thee!"

To this Solomon simply replied, that, however much he might dislike his uncle, he was unwilling to come to blows with his mother's brother.

At length Foolish Will rode up to the side of Sol. Clarion, and the conversation took a new channel.

"I'm getting tired of this region of country," said Foolish Will, "the people about here are growing cold-hearted toward poor Will; and poor Will's getting to be a man," sitting bolt upright in his saddle, "and must go travel and make voyages and see a little of the world? What say you, Master Solomon, Will Robin leaves you to-morrow, and perhaps for ever!" At this announcement the innocent creature shed a tear upon the mane of his rough colt, and stretched out his left hand toward Sol. Clarion; and Sol. Clarion, bringing his horse close to his side, grasped it warmly with his own, and said, while tears gushed to his eyes, "Never! Will, never!—Though I am robbed of my rights—there's yet enough left for us both; and, Will Robin, long as the world lasts, though all the world else may turn you from their hearts and hearths, there's always a warm corner for you here!" And Sol. Clarion, in the genuine honesty of nature, struck his hand upon his bosom. "But whither did you purpose to go, Will?" said he, mastering his emotion, and resuming the discourse, while he looked earnestly in the face of Foolish Will for a reply.

"I thought," responded Will, "I would take the coach for New York, and see if I could find anybody in that big city, which I've heard tell swarms with people just like a hive in summer, that looked like Will Robin; all the folks in these parts despise the poor vagrant!"

"Why Will," replied Sol. Clarion, "I'm going to the city myself to-morrow; will you bear me company?"

"I will! I will!" exclaimed that worthy, greatly excited, and almost jumping out of his saddle with the violence of his delight.

"To-night, then, pack up our garments in the old portmanteau; yours, Will, in one end, mine in the other, and we'll take the stage with the first cock that crows!"

"Yes!" said Will, still in an ecstasy of enjoyment at the brilliant prospect of travel, "and

I'll go to York in a new dress; something fine. I guess it will astonish the natives." Hereupon Will discharged a heavy peal of laughter, and at that moment they found themselves in the renowned city of Peth, at the door of Sol. Clarion's home; those twin martyrs, Mr. Bull and Counsellor Doublet, having in the meantime galloped down the road and out of sight.

The next morning Will Robin was awake with the dawn; and the sun had no sooner exhibited his jolly face from his eastern tipping-shop, than Will Robin's corresponding feature shone through the portals of Sol. Clarion's dwelling, upon the whole subjacent region. Will was all smiles and complacency; bustling from spot to spot; now taking up the dinner-horn and blowing an idle blast and laying it down again; and now dashing into the house to obtain some trifling commodity, and again bursting through the door into the open air, to stuff it into the capacious portmanteau. At the hour when the stage arrived Foolish Will presented himself as a passenger, tricked out in a short brown coat, with something of the quaker lurking about the collar, though it had altogether fled from the skirts, which were swallow-tailed; close homespun pantaloons; a monstrous pair of jack-boots, borrowed from Sol. Clarion's grandfather, and, upon his head, a sugar-loaf, white felt hat, picked up in some random pilgrimage to the garret of Counsellor Doublet. Sol. Clarion, who lingered behind Will Robin, having affectionately parted with his grand-parents, and received God-speed, came forth modestly attired in a plain, country-made, black hat, a dark-blue coat with metal buttons, and other parts of dress to correspond. They both took up their position on a high back seat, outside, which overlooked the whole vehicle, turned their faces for a last look at the old homestead, the driver cracked his whip, the stage whirled off, and in a moment the city of Peth, and all that it held, was lost from their gaze.

They had not travelled far down the turnpike before a new and unexpected object arrested their progress. This was nothing less than that learned and sagacious legal authority, Peter Doublet, clad in his black-velvet coat, white small-clothes, and gold-laced cocked hat, with his sword at his side, three or four musty volumes under one arm, and under the other the portentous blue bag, with an appearance of unusual rotundity and repletion. Sol. Clarion was not a little surprised at this apparition, at this peculiar time, particularly as Mr. Doublet exclaimed to the driver, "I will take a seat, sir, with my friends on the outside; more especially as I shall need their services when I get into town, and wish, therefore, to keep my eye upon them!" Saying this, he passed his three or four dull looking volumes and well stuffed blue bag up to Will, and very speedily mounted after them, into the third seat in the rear.

"How is this, Counsellor Doublet?" asked

Sol. Clarion, shaking him by the hand, as the mail-stage again started off. "Whither are you travelling, Mr. Doublet, if I may put so bold a question?"

"I am travelling, Mr. Clarion," replied the counsellor, solemnly, "in quest of my lost professional honor. Yesterday morning I had it—this morning I awoke, and where was it? Where was it?" he asked again, lifting his voice as if addressing a jury. "You ask me, sir, whither I travel. I journey to the city of New York to obtain a mandamus writ of privilege as an officer of the court!" With this answer to Clarion's interrogatory, Lawyer Doublet sunk into a dignified silence, which was steadily preserved for almost the entire remainder of the journey. Onward the stage-coach rolled, here disgorging a heavy leather bag, filled with letters, like the moon, that planetary night-coach, discharging aereolites, pleasant missives of her goddessship; there taking up a chance passenger, and again rumbling on its way for miles without pause or diversion, unless the hurling of a brown-paper parcel, or some other slight token from friends up the road, like a bomb, into an open door or window be so considered. In this way they rolled down into the pleasant village of Rye, and through that Huguenot stronghold, New Rochelle, taking a bird's-eye view of Mamaroneck, Pelham, and sundry other towns and townlets, as they glanced along.

Ever and anon Will Robin enlivened the journey by carolling forth fragments of rare and reverend ditties, such as "As I walked forth on a morning in the month of May," or imparting to his selections an air of greater sententiousness and profundity, as in the following scrap of shrewd rhyme:

"A man of words and not of deeds,  
Is like a garden full of weeds;  
And when the weeds begin to grow,  
He's like a garden full of snow," &c.

At Eastchester, a spruce, spare man, in a fur cap, with a large white cauliflower stuck in the button-hole of a purple frock-coat, and a slate-colored game-cock under his left arm, came forth. There was something peculiarly queer and quizzical about this person's nose and mouth; a playful smile that rippled about the corners of the latter feature, like a rivulet with the sun shining on its surface, and a red glow hovering over the tip of the former, which seemed to be the humorous smile lingering above its birthplace before it disappeared from the odd little countenance for ever.

The spruce spare man was a new passenger, who, seeing the single vacancy in the high outside occupied by Doublet, Clarion, and Will, said, "I'll take that seat, driver, as I'd like to make an observation or two on nature as we go along. P'r'aps, gentlemen," turning to the worthy trio, "it'll not be inconvenient to have some pleasant conversation on natural wonders and such like, as we travel. Besides, young Joseph," affectionately ogling his game-cock with one eye, and a brace of young ladies with

in the stage-coach with the other, as he mounted into his seat, "might be inclined to play the physician inside there, and draw blood from the hands of those fair creatures without being regularly called in!"

At this sally the indescribable smile kindled about the mouth of the spruce passenger—the corresponding glow lit up the extremity of his nose, and, patting the slate-colored creature under his arm kindly on his crest, he sat for a moment intensely silent.

"Gentlemen," said he, warming into a fine flow of talk as the stage-coach rattled on, "the sooner we're known to each other the better. My name," bowing at each branch of the announcement to one of the King street travellers, "my name is Paul—Hyaena—Patchell; but you'll oblige me when you call upon me—for I intend to invite you all to my house before we part—by inquiring for P. Hyaena Patchell. I prefer that style, as you'll perceive it's more ferocious, and better suited for the keeper of a wild-beast show, and the greatest collection of natural wonders now extant in the four quarters! I have been," continued the smart showman, "scouring the country for a five-legged calf, to complete my collection; or a cow, with the horns growing upon her flanks. Confound the stupid creatures! they put me out. I couldn't as much as find one with even a moderate swelling to pass for a dromedary. Nevertheless I've met with a little success," brushing down the feathers of young Joseph cautiously, "gentlemen, I've picked up a game-cock with a face just like General Jackson. See!" holding up the slate-colored bird, "every line's distinct—here's the warlike nose, the warrior eye, and," at this moment one of the legs of the interesting creature slipped from his hand, and dashed two thirds of a spur into the smart showman's wrist, who exclaimed, smiling faintly, "by the Bengal lion, the general has just drawn his sword!" The conversation of the showman had been sustained in so high a pitch of voice as to be generally overheard, and a loud roar of laughter shook the mail-stage as he uttered this last remark.

"Can you tell me, sir, as you seem to be sum'm'at of a philosopher, why horses aren't born asses?" asked Foolish Will, of the smart showman. On the latter gentleman's expressing a doubt of his ability to accommodate Mr. Robin with an answer, Will replied, "It's mainly, sir, for the want of ears!" And the smart showman fell into a thoughtful silence of several minutes' duration.

They were now rattling over Harlaem bridge. The smart showman had again opened the flood-gate of discourse, and a vast deal of good conversation passed between him and Will Robin on the subject of natural wonders; a mermaid, with bowels of straw, belonging to him, that had been "burnt out" one night by an accidental spark falling upon her tail; a famous Bengal lion, in his show, with the finest mouth of any animal of that species in christendom; all of which closed with the observation that he

thought that the arrival of the general would create a great excitement in town, and a fervent invitation to Will and his friend Mr. Clarion, to call at 9 1-4 Bowery, and see his collection.

Meantime, Clarion and Doublet were silent, until they came opposite Gallows hill, where an execution was taking place at that very time, and as Doublet beheld the poor victim dangling in the last agonies, he exclaimed—"My God! what sight is yonder!—A man by the neck! If man," continued the counsellor, after a thoughtful pause—"if man were a poor dried pear or salted flitch of bacon, it would beseem well enough. It is bad enough to hang wolves and weasels, and other carrion. What a contempt must I have for my humanity, my young sir, when I see a part of it strung up yonder like a bunch of foul garlic or hetchelled flax!" These observations on the part of Mr. Doublet were very sensible and true-spirited, and if he had ended there he would have deserved the name of a sober and thinking man, but in a moment he added, "Would to heaven! Mr. Clarion, our law-makers might re-establish the noble trial by combat!" The erudition of the smart showman was here sadly at fault, and he was obliged to put two or three questions as to the character of this process, to Sol. Clarion, who replied that "it was a method of settling murders (he believed) wherein the party accused of the homicide fell pell-mell, with bare fists, case-knife or other convenient weapon, upon the next of kin to the deceased, and the next of kin fell pell-mell in a similar manner upon the party accused, and they belabored and thrust at each other until one or the other's business accounts with this world were finally closed up and legered, and the party thus disposed of was held to have been altogether in the wrong; and thus, you see," concluded Solomon, "the whole matter was settled without the expense of rope, judge, or jury; sheriff, gallows-tree, or new breeches and bonnet to see the hanging in: the surviving combatant was fully satisfied, and the dead man never walked the earth at unseasonable hours!"

By the time this judicious explanation was ended the coach had halted opposite a pleasant yellow house, with a slim, round cupola stuck on its roof, like a high-crowned Dutch hat, and a back-door, with a portico looking out into a cheerful graveyard. "I think this is the house," said Sol. Clarion to the driver, and a meager friend of the driver's jumped from the box, knocked at the door, and inquired if Dr. Nicholas Grim lived there. At this, a pretty, blushing face was thrust out of a second-story window, smiled softly at Solomon, and replied that he did, and disappeared in great haste. Sol. Clarion and Will Robin now dismounted, the former urging Counsellor Doublet to join them, who steadily refused, saying he must look after his mandamus at once; the smart showman bowed and smirked, and set his slate-colored game-cock a-crowing—the driver cracked his whip over the ear of his near leader, and the

stage-coach whirled away. In a moment, the door of the yellow house opened, and a healthy, fat man, in a suit of black broadcloth, projected himself headlong almost into the arms of Sol. Clarion, exclaiming, "My dear Sol., is this you? I am heartily glad to see you! This is better than a new patient, or even a consultation at the rich widow's. Why Sol., my dear fellow!" shaking him by the hand again at arms' length, "you look pale—a little fever, occasioned by riding in the wind. Come in! come in!" putting one arm about his waist, and motioning toward the door, "oh! here's your cousin Grace!" At this, the proprietor of the pretty blushing face that was thrust out of the second-story window came forward from behind a white pocket-handkerchief, and extended her hand to Sol. Clarion, who received it with a similar demonstration, exclaiming, as he gave it a gentle pressure, "Ah! Grace, you didn't visit poor Peth this year!"

And she, smiling archly upon Mr. Clarion, replied, "Oh! Sol., I am glad I did not; for I imagine it has brought you down!" Then streaks of crimson and deep red flushed all over her neck and brow, as if she thought she had said more than it was proper for a maiden to disclose, and at the first opportunity she glided silently away, leaving the discourse with Dr. Nicholas Grim and his worthy nephew.

Six short months had rolled around from this period, and Sol. Clarion was domiciliated with his good-hearted uncle—taking the place and fulfilling the duties of an apothecary, who had been his uncle's former assistant, and who had unfortunately died of the fumes of a new pill he was on the eve of discovering only a week before Sol. Clarion's arrival. Sol's journey had been undertaken in consequence of a letter from Dr. Nicholas, warmly tendering the situation; and Sol. Clarion had accepted it, on condition that he should be allowed to bring Foolish Will with him, to serve prescriptions, use the pestle and mortar, and perform other simple services of a similar nature. Six pleasant months have slipped from the calendar, and now it becomes our duty, however painful, as faithful chroniclers, to open a strange and singular chapter in the history of the generous son of Æsculapius in whose house our adventurer has found a cheerful home.

## THE VISION OF DR. NICHOLAS GRIM.

CONTAINING THE CONCLUSION OF THE ADVENTURES OF SOL. CLARION.

"Titty and Tiffin, Suckin

And Pidgen, Liard and Robin!

White spirits, black spirits, gray spirits, red spirits,  
Devil-toad, devil-ram, devil-cat, and devil-dam,  
Why Hoppo and Stadlin, Hellwain and Puckle!"

THE WITCH: a Tragi-comedy, by Thos. Middleton.

THE pleasant yellow house of Dr. Nicholas Grim, with its slim, round cupola, stood in the

skirts of the city. It was surrounded by a grassy door-yard, with a carriage-gate opening into the road on one side, another gate leading into a well-stocked garden in the rear, and a third facing the northeast, giving access to an orchard which had been transformed into a place of burial. The dwelling, with its appurtenances, had formerly belonged to a dry old curmudgeon, who had sold the fruit-ground in question, for a handsome consideration, to an undertaker—reserving to himself, his heirs and devisees, a privilege through the orchard-gate. The study of Dr. Nicholas Grim looked directly forth upon this graveyard; and recollecting that not a few of his own patients were slumbering there, it is singular that the worthy practitioner had not chosen some other quarter of the building for his own use. Contemplating those little green hillocks, and those peculiar, square-cut stones, unpleasant thoughts might arise in the bosom of Dr. Grim; particularly as it was hinted that the patients of Dr. Grim were allowed to enjoy the pleasure of that worthy Galen's acquaintance but a very short time after it was formed, and after he had administered his first prescription, and were forced by some urgent necessity to bid him an eternal farewell, and take their departure, post-haste, for another world.

The truth is, that Dr. Nicholas, as fine-hearted and jovial a man as ever lived, was regarded by some people as an arrant quack and pretender. However this might be, Dr. Grim was, and boasted himself to be, the discoverer of that invaluable catholicon, "The Patent Pioneer Pill." The ingenious inventor of this wonderful medicine never asserted that it could raise a man from the dead, by being administered to his corpse nine weeks after burial, nor that the cause of Methuselah's extraordinary longevity was the fact of his having taken a handful of the Patent Pioneer Pills in his coffee every morning at breakfast. But Dr. Nicholas Grim *did* profess that this astonishing pill could cure every shade and variety of disease; and that, in effecting a cure, it had a mode of operation peculiar to itself.

"The Patent Pioneer Pill," said the doctor one day to Sol. Clarion, with a grave and solemn face, in explanation of its properties, "descends into the stomach like an ordinary medical prescription or dose: when there, acted upon by the gastric juice, it loses its original shape and character, and becomes metamorphosed into a small apothecary, with a hard, granite complexion—that being, as you know, the original color of the bolus—and a lilliputian medical scalpel or shovel in his hand. Armed with this instrument, the little apothecary casts about the stomach to discover any impurities or obstructions that may there exist, and at once sets about removing them with said scalpel or shovel into the great duct or canal, the rectum, which, acting like a sewer, carries them off. After having thus cleansed the grand chamber of the human body," continued Dr. Nicholas Grim, "the pill-apothecary commences travelling upon the different alleys and by-ways of the system,

fulfilling the part of a philanthropic reformer wherever he travels—applying suitable remedies while on the spot (you see the advantages of this mode of practice, Solomon!) to scrofula, apoplexy, plethora, emaciation, dropsy, consumption, rheumatism, and every other conceivable malady.—So that by administering this renowned pill,” concluded Dr. Grim, “we in fact despatch a pocket-physician, as it were, a kind of deputy where we are unable to attend in person”—here I must confess something of a sly smile crept over the features of the celebrated inventor—“on a tour of scientific investigation through the human constitution—a miniature, medical Hercules, to knock in the head any monster of a malady that dares to show itself. It was the proudest day of my life when I discovered the ingredients of the Patent Pioneer Pill!”

What was most singular, notwithstanding the doctor’s lucid and philosophical exposition of the character and operation of the Patent Pioneer Pill, its reception into the human stomach was, in nineteen cases out of twenty, followed, as I have before suggested, by the speedy transfer of the recipient from his own snug fireside, and comfortable suit of broadcloth or homespun, to a cold basement, without windows, under ground, and a disagreeable mahogany or cherry overcoat, furnished by that tailor to the corpse,—a sexton. In other words, a large majority of the patients of Dr. Nicholas Grim died upon his hands: so that his little apothecary with the granite complexion, who travelled interior, must, as Sol. Clarion insinuated, have very often lost his way!

Now opens that strange chapter in the history of the doctor to which we have referred.

It was a pleasant, tranquil afternoon in the latter part of July. Over all the region within view of the white round cupola of Dr. Grim, an unbroken silence hung. Within the house, there was perfect calm; Sol. Clarion and Grace Grim were gone to the city in the doctor’s gig, and their laughing dialogue and cheerful tread were not heard as was wont. Will Robin was out rambling along the river, practising that merry device of his, of catching shrimps with a shot-bag. Without, whatever there was of life, by its motionless silence, added to the perfect quiet of the scene. In his stable stood a plump, sleek, bay-colored nag, quietly whisking his tail; while a mouse, noiseless as a Pythagorean disciple in the first years of his pupillage, was foraging about the edge of the door on a few oat-grains that had fallen from an overstocked bin above. A mottled cat, in glossy condition, sat couchant upon the half-opened stable-door, looking down with an air of sleepy indifference upon the careful little plunderer. In the door-yard the grass waved slowly, swayed by the lazy wind that just buoyed a thistle-down in the air, and prevented its falling too swiftly to the earth. At a little distance from the house might be heard the feeble tinkling of a brook, that earned its channel through the hard

soil by slight but steady labor. The sun was just disappearing in the west, and Dr. Nicholas Grim sat in his leather-backed arm-chair, in his study, with his feet resting upon a stool covered with a soft cushion of lamb’s wool, indulging in the after-dinner reverie of a corpulent man. As the sun’s last ray came in at the window, it cast the shadow of the doctor’s enormous bulk upon the opposite wall, where it assumed a new and fantastic appearance every moment, as the angle at which the sunlight entered the apartment varied. Now, his protuberant paunch was thrown into bold relief, like the moon thrusting its portly front forth from a partial eclipse; now, as one side of the coat was brought into the picture, resembling a huge ship of war with her fore-sail spread; now the broad, good-natured countenance of the doctor was caricatured into a lion’s head, or again into a long, thin, grotesque human face. Dusk crept in, and gave new touches to the picture—filling the room with odd shadows, and travestying the appearance and character of every object: a slim, wide-lipped vial, casting from the shelf upon the floor the likeness of a prim, tall Quaker, with a broad-brimmed hat; a little gallipot assuming upon the wall the counterfeit presentment of an oily Dutchman with a peaked nose, while said nose was, or seemed to be, fastened upon by the shadowy fingers of a pair of tweezers, hung up by a string. In the centre of the apartment stood a stout, circular stand, from which a number of long-necked bottles, filled with medical preparations, towered up, surrounded by a swarm of small vials and pill-boxes—flanked by a bowl of jelly, near which a chubby watch, with a heavy gold chain and seals, lay, and indolently ticked the time. In another quarter stood an old-fashioned book-case, over the top of which a plaster-of-Paris Galen and Æsculapius exhibited their dusty faces. The windows were hung with heavy curtains, and every other appointment of the room denoted competency and comfort. Not many minutes after the twilight had become tinged with the deeper colors of advancing night, a tread was heard in the hall—a muffled knock at the door: and as Dr. Grim exclaimed, “Come in!” the door opened slowly, a large man in stout boots, with a round-topped country hat, entered, and bowing with a smile, glided across the room without any of the noise which might be expected to accompany the motion of so heavy a body, and silently took his station in an extreme corner, with his face turned toward Dr. Nicholas. The doctor recognised in this mysterious personage one of his own patients, and would have taken him kindly by the hand, had he not remembered that he had buried him about twelve months before.

A second muffled knock was heard at the door; and a bold-faced man, in green spectacles, another patient of Dr. Grim’s, entered, crossed the apartment, and took his station quietly beside the first. Again the ominous sound was repeated, and a man with an oval

face joined the others. This third apparition left the door standing ajar; the mysterious, muffled knock was heard no more; but there glided in, without notice or warning, a stream of some dozen or twenty ghost-like personages, in each one of whom Dr. Grim, who was rapidly turning into a vast petrification, discovered some recent patient that had been shot down by that fatal ball, the Patent Pioneer Pill. Among others, he recognised a dapper bank-clerk, who had signalized himself by having outlived double the number of that celebrated preparation of any person on record; and—horrid spectacle!—John Simple, his late apothecary. What might be the purpose of this singular and voluntary visit, Dr. Nicholas Grim had not sufficient sagacity to conjecture. In a short time, however, the bank-clerk and the apothecary laid their ghostly heads together, and after a few minutes' consultation, the bank-clerk drew from his pocket a scroll of paper, and pondered over it about a second: the spare apothecary bustled about among the shadowy assembly, and, at a nod from the bank-clerk, the impudent man in green spectacles advanced from the throng.

"I commend these to thee as fresh!" said the impudent man, seizing Dr. Nicholas by the nose with one hand, and opening his mouth, and thrusting down the contents of a large pill-box with the other. The impudent man then adjusted his green spectacles and fell back into his place.

The nod of the bank-clerk was repeated: and a personage built like a junk bottle, having a small head and long neck, with a stout round body and square shoulders, came forward and subjected the worthy physician to the identical operation of the impudent man in green glasses, and retired.

Next a doughty brewer with an immense fist stalked forth, and crushing the pill-box with which he was furnished between two fingers, he filled his huge palm with its contents, and poured them, with an asseveration, down the doctor's throat, as if he was using a barley-scoop.

"This must be dry work," said the first apparition that had entered, the large man in stout boots, and drawing from his side coat-pocket a bottle of paregoric, he thrust the neck into the mouth of Dr. Grim (who began to make awful contortions of face), and, giving the bottle a smart jerk, discharged the whole of the fluid into his stomach.

"I think I'll bag the balls this time!" said the fourth operator, who had been a noted billiard-player, shooting the contents of an enormous box into the open mouth of Dr. Grim.

"And I'll charge home!" said a fifth patient, formerly an artillery-man, stepping out as the billiard-player drew back, placing the contents of a similar box upon the tongue of the inventor of the Patent Pioneer Pill, and forcing them with his fingers down the overcharged throat of the doctor.

"What if I throw all the balls at once!" said

a sixth, the keeper, in his lifetime, of a nine-pin alley, and he bowled a handful of pills by main force into the distended features of the terrified Dr. Grim.

Then a modest little man came forward, and, like the stout countryman, moistened this dry provender with a second infusion of fluid from a bottle which he produced.

At length the bank-clerk ceased giving nods, thrust his scroll into his pocket, and came forward himself, his skirts stuffed out to an almost horizontal position by the materials that were crammed into them.

"There's nothing like the Pioneer Pill, Dr. Grim!" said he, with a horrid smirk upon his countenance, drawing from his pocket another of the awful chip boxes, which disappeared in a trice between the jaws of Dr. Nicholas: a second from the same source soon followed it; a third, a fourth, a fifth. At length, even the inexhaustible pockets of the bank-clerk were exhausted, and he turned to the apothecary for a fresh supply—and that worthy handed over to him some dozen boxes more; the last two or three stuck in the throat of the doctor, and the bank-clerk was obliged to give him a smart punch in the bowels to open his larynx. The bank-clerk now, with large drops of sweat on his pale brow, drew back, and John Simple advanced, with a grave, doctorial air, to take his place.

Baring the arm of Dr. Grim, he took him deliberately by the wrist with thumb and finger, and gently feeling his pulse, said, "Dr. Nicholas, you appear to have something of a fever; your face is flushed, too, and there appears to be a slight flutter in the region of the heart. I am afraid you are suffering from repletion;—have you any nausea?" To this question Dr. Grim involuntarily shook his head, and Mr. John Simple proceeded: "I think we had better send down a box or two of our Patent Pioneer Pills; perhaps the little apothecary with his shovel may remove the obstruction or impurity."

There was a gentle laugh among the assembled apparitions, and the same lively process of administering pills was carried into effect as the bank-clerk had practised, the latter gentleman taking the position formerly occupied by Mr. Simple, and handing out innumerable boxes from some invisible reservoir.

As box after box followed each other rapidly into the capacious stomach of Dr. Grim, he might have thought, if thought was permitted to his awe-stricken mind, "What the devil! it can't be that that rascally apothecary, John Simple, is preparing the Patent Pioneer Pill, from my recipe in the other place—for exportation?"

Each one of the shadowy party had now administered in turn to the terrified Grim; and yet they seemed to think that the course was not quite complete: for, huddling about the stand in the centre of the room, each one seized upon vial, powder-paper, or long-necked bot-

tle, and despatched its contents after the drugs and fluids that had already travelled down the free highway of Dr. Grim's throat. The bowl of calves'-feet jelly was, however, quaffed off at a draught by the doughty brewer himself.

The apothecary, casting his eye upon the fat-faced watch, exclaimed, "Our time is up!"—and, resuming their places, they glided out of the apartment in the same order and with the same silent tread as they had entered.

In a few minutes, Foolish Will came in from practising his ingenious exploit by the river, and advancing cautiously into the study of Dr. Grim, he discovered that worthy practitioner with his feet spread out upon the floor, his hands clinging fast to the arms of his chair, and his face going through a series of singular and rapid changes, to which the rollicking motion of his whole body seemed to lend variety and vigor. Will Robin, as might be reasonably expected, thought that the doctor was playing off his countenance in a sportive way upon him; and unwilling to be outdone in so capital a diversion, he drew up a chair directly opposite Dr. Grim, and planting himself upon its edge, placed his hands upon his knees, and commenced reciprocating faces with that corpulent gentleman.

Some of the doctor's exhibitions were, however, so entirely original and astonishing, that they put at defiance Will Robin's herculean efforts to rival them; and the doctor rolled his eyeballs in a manner so picturesque and expressive, as to render every attempt to imitate their movements utterly fruitless. To these numerous and inimitable diversissements, the doctor now began to add certain indescribable motions of the hands—waving them in rapid curves toward the door—joining them significantly upon his stomach—and again brandishing both, first toward Will Robin, and then toward the hall. As they sat thus contemplating each other, and as Will began to suspect something more than amusement lay at the bottom of the matter, Sol. Clarion entered, with his gig-whip in his hand, to greet the doctor, and communicate the result of his city visit as to certain small messages that had been intrusted to him by Dr. Grim. As he drew near, he discovered that something had gone wrong with the doctor in his absence; and instinctively seizing his pulse, and finding it to beat at an unusual rate, he begged the doctor to speak. But the doctor was silent as a stone.

"For God's sake!" exclaimed Grace Grim, rushing into the room at that moment, from a brief conversation with Will Robin in the hall, "for God's sake, what is the matter with my father?"

Dr. Grim smiled upon her faintly, but made no answer. He was carried to his bed, and there he lay sick for about two weeks, articulating not a word distinctly during that time, but mumbling over, sometimes to himself, sometimes aloud, broken phrases, from which the

foregoing narrative was gathered. At the end of the time, he died in an apoplectic fit, which seized him about midday. The third day after, he was buried, and the warm tears of two affectionate and simple mourners, at least, wet the sod upon his grave.

—  
And yet the world remains, although those whom we love and reverence are buried from sight, and life must go on in its old courses after it has leaped the temporary obstruction—the pebble in its channel.

Obedying this wise, though seemingly selfish instinct, some twelve months after the death of Dr. Nicholas Grim, two fair beings in the youth of life stood up hand in hand, and before them a reverend man in sable garments likewise stood, and he pronounced before them a solemn form of words, and—they were man and wife.

A week or two after his marriage with Grace Grim, Sol. Clarion received the following epistle by the hand of a country neighbor from the city of Peth; and as he perused it, he thought he heard each line ring with the peculiar nasal twang of its author:—

GREENWICH, Conn.,

6th Month, 2d Day, 18—.

*Friend Solomon:*

Ir grieveth me much to communicate by this, tidings that thine uncle is deceased. He departed this life on first day morning, of a malignant fever, as I am informed by Dr. Slanter, who attended him during his last sickness. His malady wrought much change in thine uncle's looks, as I can state from personal observance, having inspected them with great care immediately after his lamented decease. The funeral takes place third day morning, but too early for thee to come up; thou hadst better not undertake the journey, as it may overweary thee, thou being of a feeble constitution (as I know), from a boy. Thine uncle hath left no heir, as thou knowest he was never in wedlock; consequently thou art his successor in the homestead, and whatsoever cash, moveables, and stock, he hath left. I would advise thee to plough the meadow behind the house, and to sow timothy in the blue grass meadow. The garden needs to be looked after, and the fruit-trees, as they are at present well-stocked, should be thinned out. Perhaps I had better use the kitchen herbs and early apples for my own family use, until thou comest hither. My spouse Deborah says they make exceeding good pies. Zekiel can pluck them, and it will be no great trouble; if it be, a small commission will make all right between me and thee. Zekiel proposes to gather the vegetables and fruit for us in consideration of thy letting him have a little of the live stock; a pair or two of the fowls, and a well-looking calf that is just cast by the spotted cow. I regret to add that Gideon Barley's fine red heifer hath strained her off shoulder, and h ,



may lose the crittur. I recommended salt and water for the animal; whether Gideon will use it yet is not decided. The old people are well and ask the stageriver daily (as I have observed from the kitchen window) questions concerning thy welfare. I would bring this news to thee in person, and be enabled to satisfy thy grandfather and grandmother touching thy progress and behavior in the Babylon where thou art, but there is much ploughing to be done, and I am deprived of Zephaniah's aid, he being sore of a foot with a scythe wound. Leonard hath gone over to tend the mill for Miller Kirby, and Zekiel will be busy running to and fro betwixt us and thy garden and orchard. Advising thee to keep from the snares that beset the feet of youth in the ungodly city, and recommending thee to pay thy tailor's bill, and avoid the night air:

Thine,

URIAH BLOOM.

It is thought that Doublet, the old-fangled tory lawyer, will not last the summer out. I have called upon him a score or so of times in a neighborly way, and do verily believe that the old man hath lost his wits, for he ceases not to cry out for one Mand Hamus, a king's counsel I judge, from such words as he delivers with the name. However on this point I will inform thee further in a short time, as I intend to watch with him to-night, to see what further hints he may drop in his fever, touching this and other matters.

U. B.

Happening a short time after this in the neighborhood of 9½ Bowery, Sol. Clarion's eye was attracted by a gorgeous painting, exhibiting a great variety of monsters in fanciful colors, and observing the words, "Wonderful Wild Beast Exhibition," he stepped in and asked for the proprietor, Mr. P. Hyaena Patchell. But Mr. Patchell came not forth. In answer to his inquiry, he learned that the smart showman had had his head bitten off by the famous Bengal lion, in an attempt to investigate the lungs and bronchia of that interesting animal, for the amusement of a very pleasant assemblage of apprentices, maid servants, children under thirteen at half price, and a musty medical gentleman, who was very curious to learn the physiological effect of a full grown man's placing his cranium within the jaws of a Bengal lion in robust health.

Counsellor Doublet, he ascertained, had bustled about the clerks' offices for a day or two, and been laughed at by all the clerks and scriveners in the same; was told the supreme court no longer granted the writ of privilege—and returned to the country and took to his bed. By the next mail after that which brought the epistle of Friend Bloom, he learned that the little lawyer had died over night, demanding a "mandamus writ of privilege!" in a voice of authority; and threatening an appeal to parliament if it were not granted!

## THE MELANCHOLY VAGABOND.

It was a clear October morning. The hum of the city was just beginning to swell into a distinct sound; the sun, like a cheerful face smiling from amid doubt and adversity, was pushing aside the clouds in the east, and exhibiting his broad, rubicund features in full glow and freshness; sloops, here and there, and other trim vessels were starting out from the shore, and gliding up or down the river; and in the middle of the stream two men occupied a weather-beaten, red fishing-boat, motionless and silent. One of them sat in the stern with his hands clenched upon his knees, and a wo-begone expression of countenance; and the other occupied the middle seat with an oar in each hand dipping in the water.

The first had a dry, shrivelled face, was short of stature, and was attired in a tattered gray overcoat, stretching from chin to heel, with a woollen cap, fashioned very much like a night-cap, on his head. The second was a round, beef-fed personage, built like a duck, with an immense bill and corresponding mouth, and amply filled every inch of his garments with his person. He was clad in a long-tailed clay-colored coat, mud-colored vest, colorless pair of breeches, and dusty hat.

"Don't you feel any sort of a freshness from the morning air, Neddy?" asked the duck-faced gentleman, pulling a stroke or two down the river.

"No, none at all, no how; there's something here, Nosey," laying his right hand upon his heart, "a dead sickness I'm afraid that breeze nor physician can cure!" He then heaved a sigh, and joining his hands together again, exclaimed in a still more pathetic voice, "Ah! you knows not, Nosey Bellows, tho' you be's a father, what it is to have a ungrateful dau'ter! To have a girl what marries throw herself away against her daddy's will."

"Per'aps we'd better pull for the fishing ground, Neddy," said the duck-faced man, "the sight of the cheerful porgies comin' up on the hook may sort o' revive you, and make you forget your suff'rin's. A bit of nature now and then is very pleasant to the spirits! Come," concluded the duck-faced man, "we'll try a stroke for the island!—what say you, Neddy Budge?"

"Neddy Budge can't go, Nosey, no how; you'd better pull to shore and land me, for somehow or other I always feel more melancholy on water. So I'll turn rudder," giving the tiller a turn feebly, "and go ashore and take a stroll along the banks!"

"Well, if you will, you will!" said Mr. Bellows, drawing his oars smartly through the water, and the red boat shot swiftly toward land. In a few minutes they struck the shore, Budge jumped out, and Bellows turning again scudded down the river, took in another friend of his, and pointed prow for Governor's island.



The history of Neddy Budge up to this period was simply this. He had opened life as a constable in a fifty-dollar court. From his humble position on the floor of a court-room, clearing the bar and bawling "to order!" he had, one lucky day, by a sudden change of parties and favor with political leaders, found his way to the justice's seat, and there he presided for many years a legal dark-lantern, by whose uncertain and wavering light many an unfortunate plaintiff or defendant was plunged into a pit of costs. Again the wheel of fortune turned. Again he handled the marshal's truncheon for a time; but even that simple staff of authority was wrested from his hand, and he became an idle hanger-on upon the court, without business or profit, until the sweeper of the court-room died, and then, in consideration of his former luminous services on the bench, Neddy Budge was inducted into that modest office. He soon became a poor devil, and slipping rapidly through those nice gradations which are known only in low life, he settled into the character in which he has appeared before the reader, namely that of a vagabond fisherman.

After Neddy Budge had abandoned Bellows and his boat, he directed his steps along the shore indulging, as he walked, a melancholy vein of thought and meditation.

"Who'd have thought it," said Neddy, torturing his face into an expression of refined suffering, "a girl as was bro't up so kindly—and so well edecated as Nancy—poor Nan!" and a small drop of fluid distilled from the eyes of the Melancholy Vagabond, "and then to marry sich a tripe! a mere dog-queller."—Here Mr. Budge's feelings of indignation became too strong for oral expression, and he accordingly plucked his woollen cap from his brow and crushed and twisted it between his hands, until all semblance of its character as an ornament for the human head had entirely disappeared. "I can't stand it no how any longer," at length uttered Neddy Budge, stamping his foot fiercely on the ground, "I'll wring his neck off, and they may take the law of me! I don't care no how!—I'll choke him with soot afore he shall live with my daughter! Yes I will!" and the evil-minded Budge doubled his fist and shook it in the air as if the powerful proposition he had just made had been assailed by some invisible casuist. Upon the delivery of this emphatic threat, Mr. Budge directed his steps with considerable speed toward the city. He had not walked many paces in this direction before he resumed his original course with more moderation, falling again into a strain of dolorous reflection.

"But I ha'n't the spirit to murder a man, though he be a dog-killer, and as helpless and feeble as a puppy just whelped. If he'd have been a rag-picker, or a horse-doctor, or a master chimley-sweep, or any sort of a thing but a dog-killer, Neddy Budge could have stood it. But then, he's a despicable murderer of poor curs! and knocks 'em in the head for the cor-

poration, a dollar a-picce. I hope Nancy 'll starve afore she eats bread earned by sich practices!"

As he uttered these words, with his eyes cast sadly upon the ground, a laughing fellow, with a crimson complexion, slapped Neddy Budge heartily upon the shoulder.

This worthy was a jolly constable, a former companion of Budge's, and always known and addressed as "William." And here, kind reader, allow me to drop a pithy apothegm, founded on much observation and experience. There is a class of persons whose full name is as difficult to get at as to discover the longitude, or the meaning of a Hebrew commentator. They are known simply as Johnson, or Hodges, or Smith; or as John, Bob, Philip, or Dick. Hostlers, coachmen, negroes, errand-boys, constables, and park-keepers, are generally known in this way. They seem to constitute a kind of half-humanity, which is sufficiently honored and recognised by a single appellative. Why clergymen are put to the inconvenience of christening them into full names, is a mystery I could never fathom.

"Good morning, judge!" said the jolly constable, touching his hat with a mock air of profound reverence, as Neddy Budge looked up, "how does your honor feel this morning?"

"Miserable, William, miserable. I'm in sich low spirits, and have sich a ringing in my head I can't hardly live."

"Why, how is this, Neddy?" continued the jolly constable, "your mind ought to be as light as a lark, now; you've got no cases to try, no juries to panel?"

"You say true, William," interposed the Melancholy Vagabond, "but I'm afeard a jury 'll be panelled on me afore long that will give in a final verdict; and my case will be tried beyond appeals to higher courts!" And the Melancholy Vagabond let fall a tear upon his coat-sleeve.

Hereupon the jolly constable looked very solemn, and said, "Neddy Budge, you didn't use to be this way in the old court; there, Justice Budge was as laughing a fellow as ever sat on the bench. Don't you recollect," he concluded, smiling, and nudging Mr. Budge under the small ribs, "the case of Wright *vs.* Passnips, where you threatened one of defendand's witnesses, if he didn't stop snivelling in court you'd send him up to the dry dock to be new calked!" Upon the delivery of this funny reminiscence the jolly constable exploded in a horse-laugh, which, however, produced only a sickly smile upon the countenance of ex-Justice Budge. At this, Catchpole was slightly disconcerted, and, shaking Neddy hastily by the hand, hurried off to court, saying he "must take out a fresh summons in the case of the huckster woman, who always puts her head out of the garret-window, saying, she's just gone out of town!"

Neddy Budge thereupon seized his woollen cap by the top, gave it two or three uneasy turns upon his head, settled it with a new part in

front, and, plunging both hands in his deep coat-pockets, proceeded on his way more thoughtful and melancholy than ever.

The gloom which now pervaded the bosom of Mr. Budge, had been gathering over it for more than a twelvemonth. It had, at length, become insupportable. The poor fellow as he now travelled along, keeping the river in view, burst forth at times with some heavy passage of complaining, or sitting down upon the stump of a tree, or a rock, or any chance object, wrung his hands and indulged in a copious discharge of tears. The man's only and darling daughter had married a dog-killer! Thus Neddy Budge rambled about the whole morning, sometimes keeping upon the road, but oftener straggling through the fields or along the shore. At length he formed a desperate resolve. He had reached an old, deserted granary, standing near the river, with a door, over which swung a rusty iron crane, looking forth upon the water. Into this Neddy Budge easily made an entrance. For a long time he seemed to be searching about the building for some object in vain. At length, discovering a stout piece of cord, his object seemed to be attained, and, forming one end of the same into a noose, he proceeded calmly and thoughtfully into the upper story of the granary. Here he threw open the door, drew in the crane, and attached to its extremity one end of the rope. In a moment the other end was about his own neck, he had given the crane an outward swing, and Neddy Budge hung dangling in the air!

Nosey Bellows, his companion of the morning, had been unsuccessful in his fishing venture at Governor's island, and had glided up the river, and dropped anchor off the Long island shore, opposite the very building from which Neddy Budge had just thrown himself. He was sitting on the landward side of the boat, with his line carelessly dipping in the water, and looking over toward the city. The sun was sunken low in the west, and brought out the object upon which his gaze was now fastened, with great distinctness against the sky.

"As sure as a fish is a water animal," exclaimed the duck-feathered gentleman to his friend in the boat, "there's a man hanging from Astor's old granary by the neck!"

At this his friend turned, and, looking in the direction to which he pointed, replied, "Poh! Nosey, it's nothing but a sack of wheat that they're swinging in, or a sheaf of straw!" and, looking more earnestly, he seemed to doubt something the report of his own vision.

"Sheaf of straw nor sack of wheat has passed that door or hung on that crane this twenty year; never sin' the dead pedler was found in the loft. I'm sure its a man, and what's more, we'll pull over and cut him down; there may be some snuff o' life in him yet."

Instantly they took in their lines and anchor, and, each seizing an oar, they pulled with main and might straight across the river. As they drew nearer, Bellows, observing the long gray

overcoat, exclaimed, "It's Neddy Budge, as I live!" and he threw greater strength into every stroke. They soon landed, and both ran at full speed toward the old granary. In a moment they drew in the crane, but, finding him stone-cold, the duck-feathered gentleman remarked, with considerable trepidation in his accent, that "It wouldn't do to cut him down till the crowner came. It was agin the law!—So I've heard poor Neddy himself say many a time!"

Nosey Bellows soon despatched his friend in quest of that functionary, and, allowing the body of Neddy Budge to swing back to its original position, he descended below stairs and stood underneath the crane looking up, with singular expression of visnomy, into the shrivelled face of his deceased friend. He was there joined by a second party, namely, the jolly constable, who had come that way to try the inaccessible huckster (who lived near by) with a "fresh summons."

They now observed, for the first time together, that Neddy Budge held his woollen cap in his hand, which was extended forward as if in the act of tossing it from him, when it was arrested by the death-pang. The philosophy of neither could solve this mysterious position of the dexter arm, and there they stood wondering till the coroner arrived. He very speedily, with the aid of the constable, summoned a jury from the neighborhood; who, hearing the testimony of Nosey Bellows and jolly William, as to his morning's conversation with each of them, rendered the verdict, "died of his own act, in consequence of melancholy and depression of spirits." The jolly constable thereupon departed in search of the ingenious huckster; the body of Neddy Budge was lifted into the red fishing-boat, and Nosey Bellows and his friend rowed sorrowfully down the stream. The next day the Melancholy Vagabond was buried.

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## THE MERRY-MAKERS.—EX-PLOIT NO. I.

THE MERRY-MAKERS IN QUEST OF A DINNER; AND THE COSTUME IN WHICH THEY INTRODUCED THEMSELVES TO CHICKEN PIE AND CIDER.

EVERYWHERE, all over the face of the earth, are scattered, like dimples, crews and companies of droll fellows, to keep the world in humor, and preserve the arts of laughter and frolic from total oblivion. Here and there, some two or three of them will obtain a foothold, and, practising their mad pranks, and uttering their witty sayings, make whole counties and townships ring with the echo. These are your wild blades, roaring boys, with something of the goosecap, something of the swaggerer in their composition, whose exploits are part of

the history, and their mirthful speeches part of the vernacular of country villages and neighborhoods. In the chronicles and traditions of such places, they fill the posts of Robin Hoods and court-jesters; every old woman in a cap takes their fame into keeping, and it is handed down from chimney corner to chimney corner, sometimes even as far as the third generation! God bless the jovial tribe! for they have saved many a good face from becoming mouldy and wrinkled, and sent a cheerful ray down into many a fine heart that would otherwise have become dull and torpid.

Some thirty miles from the good city of New York, a pleasant road winds through the bosom of a cheerful range of low hills, covered all the way with rich woods and pasture-lands. In the very heart of these hills stood a dilapidated and ancient out-house, in which were assembled, early on a clear midsummer morning, some six or eight laughing fellows, shabbily dressed, and engaged in earnest conversation.

"Well, my lads!" said one of them, a good-sized man, in a hawk nose, "I think we had better forego the project of tapping uncle Aaron's cider-barrels to-day. The liquor will be better a month or two hence. I have a better game to propose, that I think you'll like to have a hand in."

"What is it, Bobbylink?—let us have it," was the general acclamation and question of the party, as they gathered eagerly about the speaker.

"As many as would as leave as not have clean rigging and a hot dinner to-day, will please to not keep their mouths shut!" and a universal "Amen!" burst from the throats of the persons assembled.

"If so," continued the speaker, who seemed to be master of the revels, "report yourselves and your condition as I call your names."

Saying this, he drew a dirty piece of paper from his hat, and called "Habbakkuk Viol."

"Here: breeches open as Deacon Barker's mouth when he's praying; coat with tails fighting agin each other, and suing for separation; shirt turned into ribands, and gone into boots which are on a visit to the cobbler's; belly in a state of insurrection."

"John Smally."

"On the spot, sir, and has a faint recollection of a breakfast he eat 'bout a month ago; believes there was such a meal as dinner once in vogue in these parts. Garments similar-like to Mr. Viol's."

"Sam Chisel."

"Your sarvant!" said a stout-built fellow, with a slight hump on his shoulders, throwing a somerset and lighting in front of Mr. Bobbylink with a solemn expression of face. "Has attended three house-raisin's, two weddin's, and one christenin'; come off with a dry belly from all six. For why? One man fell down dead with an opoplexy, the furst mug of cider he swallowed; 'cordingly, the barrels was all spiked, for fear of fudder accidents. The oth-

er two raisin's was on tae rock crystal, cold water plan: the baby at the christenin' was too small herself for to eat, 'cordingly they giv' nothin' out. The two weddin's was over when I got there—'cause why? 'Bak. Viol told me the wrong hour."

"That will do, Mr. Chisel," said the good-sized man; "fall in with Smally there, and save your stories for next twenty-first of June."

"Harry Harvest."

"Overcoat in good condition. Hat, coat, breeches, and breakfast, missing."

After these, one or two other very similar personages gave corresponding responses, and the roll-call was completed.

"Follow me, my lads!" said Mr. Bobbylink, taking up the line of march toward a crumbling, old-fashioned building, of which the out-house was an appurtenance. The edifice which they now approached had been unoccupied and gradually falling into decay for several years. The owner of the lands on which it stood had erected a new tenement on a different part of his farm, and abandoned this to bats and owls, and such companions of owls as Mr. Bobbylink and his club of wild fellows.

There was a part of the building, however, into which even these dare-devils were afraid to intrude, and that was an upper chamber which was said to be tenanted by the ghost of a Jew who had died there at the close of the last century. In that room it was currently rumored that the spirit of the Hebrew kept bachelor's chambers in a very ghostly manner—taking his meals, clinking and counting his silver, and retiring to bed, with all the regularity of a gentleman in the flesh. To confirm this state of things, Mr. Sam Chisel said that he had seen a man in a thin face and Roman nose stand at the window several times "atween daylight and dark, his hand stroking a dry tuft of whisker, like a goat." And Habbakkuk Viol asserted, on his own personal hopes of salvation, that he had heard a graveyard-voice distinctly enunciate, when Joshua Jolton, Esquire, was ringing his barrow shoats, "Dem those shwine!" Into this chamber, notwithstanding the terrors which guarded it, Bob Bobbylink now boldly advanced, followed by Smally, Chisel, Viol, and their compatriots, in a state of considerable trepidation and paleness.

"Yesterday afternoon," said Bob Bobbylink, in explanation of this sudden intrusion into the haunted apartment, "I was crossing the open garret in search of an old firelock: all at once the casement of the north window rattled, one of the window-frames fell out, and a gust came roaring through the building—swept my hat from my head—the little Jew's door burst open, through rolled my hat, and I stood shivering, bareheaded, in the wind. In a trice, however, I was filled with huge promptings of valor and adventure, and pushed forward toward the little Jew's bed-chamber. I found nothing but an old high-backed chair, a bedstead with the cords mouldering to pieces, and this black clothes-

press standing against the wall. The little Jew had quit the premises, and as I was the first one to make a voyage into these unknown parts, I claim a right in all that is found, as first discoverer. I searched diligently, my good fellows, every nook and cranny of the room, for cash and hard silver, and, to my utter astonishment, found not a farthing. Nevertheless, I have fallen upon something, that, if it be well managed, will purchase a prime dinner for us for to-day, at least." At the conclusion of this brief narrative, Mr. Bobbylink advanced to the clothes-press, turned a rusty key in the lock, and the doors flew open, and disclosed to the staring eyes of the party a great number of curious dresses, carefully folded up and laid in order on the shelves, interlarded here and there with old-fashioned swords, matchlocks, and pistols.

"I don't see how a dinner is to come out of this," said Habbakkuk Viol, after gazing upon the apparel a reasonable length of time, "unless, Bob, you propose to feed us, like ostriches, on rags and iron. Jack Smally here has a stomach, I doubt not, that would digest one of those antediluvian matchlocks for a breakfast, and despatch a pair of those odd-looking pistols between meals. Otherwise, I see no meal nor mutton in a case of old clothes."

"Poh!" retorted Bobbylink, with an air of hearty disdain, "Viol, you see nothing but that which is plainly before your eyes; yea, and it must come somewhat in contact with your nose before you can thoroughly smell out its meaning."

"I agree with Viol," interposed Mr. John Smally; "I see no purpose to which you can put these fantastic dresses, unless it be to peddle them at the weaver's, a penny a pound, and the works on the firearms for old iron, a penny and a half."

"You are a pretty fellow, Johnny Smally," replied Bob Bobbylink, with an air of still greater superiority than he had adopted toward Viol, "a pretty fellow, indeed, to tell what use may be made of these instruments. Your conceits, Smally, are parcel of your brain—patchwork and rusty. Your skull is quilted with the very odds and ends of your grandmother's rag-box,—stuffed, like an old saddle, with tow and feathers—"

Mr. Bobbylink would have prolonged his reprimand, had he not at this moment cast his eye upon John Smally, who hung his head, played with the fragment of a jacket-button, and exhibited other indisputable signs of penitence and contrition.

Now it should be understood that the shirtless Smally was the factotum, humble servant and parasite of Robert Bobbylink; that he had discovered, at a very early period of life, that Mr. Bobbylink possessed the finest pair of skirts of any gentleman of his acquaintance; that he had attached himself to said skirts very shortly after such discovery, and had clung to the same up to the present period, with the ten-

nacity of a genuine mastiff. He accordingly made it his special business to circulate Mr. Bobbylink's jocose sayings far and wide; to repeat his stories, with the prefix, "Mr. Bobbylink said," at all the convenient inns and public places within a dozen miles' walk; and to perform similar other small duties which a vassal should of right render unto his liege lord. He was Bob Bobbylink's humble shadow. If Bob expanded into importance, Mr. Smally felt it his duty to dilate in a corresponding manner; if Mr. Bobbylink at any time, from the force of circumstances, or detection in some prank or project, was made to look dwarfish, John Smally, according to the charter by which he lived, was forced to look as small as a grasshopper. From all these causes, a rebuke from Mr. Bobbylink was no less than a thunder-clap to the ears of Mr. Smally, and he was profoundly hushed and silent until it rumbled by; though he had wit at will against any other antagonist than his patron.

"Gentlemen and good fellows," continued Bob Bobbylink, "east of this building, about five miles, a wedding takes place this morning; the wedding-dinner will be on the table at one o'clock, precisely. I propose that we eat *that* dinner. We shall entitle ourselves to the poultry, vegetables, boiled tongue, and applesauce, which will figure there, by right of a device that I will open to you, if you will be quiet just three minutes and a quarter." At this passage of his address, a solemn tranquillity rested over the apartment. "I have examined this wardrobe carefully, and with an eye to our project. I find a suit of the little Jew's, including the tall blue cap and long blue coat in which he was so well known in these parts; that I shall don myself: a ghost may do something for flesh and blood sometimes. Here also is the dress of a Hessian horseman; and as old aunt Anderson (who says she lost an ear by a trooper's blade during the old war) will be at the wedding, she will undoubtedly aid us a little with her owl's voice when we appear. Habbakkuk, you have something of a ruffian trooper's air; may you not browbeat a passage to a dinner with the butt-end of this blunderbuss?" producing a rusty article of that description from a drawer of the clothes-press. "Let the others," he concluded, "fall in our rear, properly caparisoned, and all is safe. If clowns and boors can withstand the ghost of a Jew, and the blunderbuss of a mad Hessian, there is more sustenance in beans and buttermilk than I have dreamed of!"

The old building echoed with a hearty shout as Bob Bobbylink ended, and, under his direction, they speedily doffed their ragged dresses, and set about accoutering themselves in the new equipments thus aptly and unexpectedly furnished. The articles forming an entire and complete suit, were luckily found carefully pinned together, and this rendered the task comparatively easy and brief. Besides mere garments, they discovered wigs, boots, firearms.

swords, guns, &c., all of which might be rendered of service in the approaching exploit.

"While I was rumaging a private corner of the press," said Bobbylink, as he produced the habiliments, "I fell upon a history of the queer little Jew, written by his own hand, in a parchment-book, from which it appears that he was originally an old-clothesman in England; after a while, like a grub, he turned from that calling into an anti-kary and dress-fancier, which, you see, is only a better sort of an old-clothesman. Following up this sort of a profession, he gathered wherever he travelled the rarest and most curious kinds of dress and armor—guns, carbines, muskets, and dragons, as he calls 'em. He says, at one time he was accused of having stolen a couple of dresses from a nobleman's collection; but this he stoutly denies, in the name of Father Abram, Isaac, and Jacob. Finally, he came over to this country about the year seventeen thirty-five; lived in the city a great many years; and at last came out to these parts during the revolutionary war, and added a little to his wardrobe;—there his parchment-book breaks off: and I conclude about the year eighteen hundred he turned from a dress-fancier into a ghost."

In the course of two or three hours the party was completely apparelled, and defiled from the old bed-chamber in the following order: First, Mr. Robert Bobbylink gravely stalked forth in the guise of the defunct Israelite, which consisted of the tall blue cap and long blue coat already mentioned, the latter being ornamented with hieroglyphic buttons; beneath it a rich white silk vest, with gay figures and devices; black pantaloons, which, from their brevity, seemed to exhibit a reluctance to join a pair of low shoes, surmounted by two lively buckles of brass. In his hand Mr. Bobbylink bore a maple cane, the property and customary travelling companion of the deceased gentleman whom he represented. It was with intense difficulty that Bob Bobbylink forced himself into these garments, which were about three sizes too small for his person; and he was obliged to chalk his face freely, to take down the color, and give it something of the paleness which is proper and decent for a ghost.

Next to him, in order, marched Habbakkuk Viol, wearing upon his brow a ferocious helmet of jacked leather, guarded by rusty steel hoops; on his broad-shouldered back he bore a long-waisted fiery red coat, with fierce metal buttons; his nether limbs were snugly encased in chamois leather breeches, of an indescribable complexion, the lower extremities of which disappeared in a couple of heavy boots, enlivened at the rear with a pair of jingling iron spurs. Over his breast, in a leathern belt, an open-mouthed blunderbuss swung, sustained at one end by his right-hand, at its muzzle by his left.

Behind him slowly and thoughtfully waddled along the redoubted John Smally; clad in a broad-skirted Dutch coat, with awful cuffs; legs buried in truck-hose, which swelled above

and beneath the knee into separate inflations, ending in peaked shoes that cut the ground like scythes; upon his head sat a jaunty cocked-hat, from beneath which a brown queue streamed like the tail of a kite or a comet. In his hand he sustained (terrible anachronism!) a dragon pistol, as old as the age of Elizabeth—an old-fashioned weapon, with a long handle, its works in the centre, and the ornament of a dragon's head at its muzzle. Having three dresses underneath his outer one, Mr. Smally moved with great solemnity and slowness, and indulged, at times, in singular expressions of viznomy, and strange gesticulations of the body.

Treading close upon the heels of Smally, came Sam. Chisel. How can I (unless in truth inspired) describe the jovial figure that now sidled through the chamber door? Stuffed monster! elephant in broadcloth! balloon that had taken two taper legs, dancing inflated on the earth! Mr. Samuel Chisel was endued, on the present occasion, in the habiliments of a famous clown, who had cast his clothes in the city of New York, during the war; thrown aside his cap and bauble, and, in fine, sold out his wardrobe to the little Jew antiquary. Upon his brow, then, Sam. Chisel wore a singularly constructed hat, having a towering steeple of felt for its centre, with a small, white feather peeping from its points, and two flaming angles of painted paste-board for its sides. The steeple was garnished with innumerable glittering spangles, and yards of gold cord coiling about to its very spire, and from one angle hung a silken tassel of considerable size, in peril, every moment, of being devoured by a monstrous painted lion, rampant on the neighboring pasteboard corner, with his mouth agape. Around the base of this triple hat a lively belt was fastened by an immense pewter buckle; and from beneath the whole a red wig depended, under cover of a linen bag, which was adorned with a portentous purple rose, or swinging cabbage-plant. The hump of Mr. Chisel reposed beneath a brilliant green jacket, adorned down its whole front by vast wooden buttons, painted white, which held it closely fastened to the breast. This was stuffed out to portly dimensions by the aid of three goodly sheaves of straw, that had been stowed into their place by the united strength of Viol, Bobbylink, and Harvest. The same favor had been likewise conferred on a pair of black silk breeches, whose extremities, however, tapered off so unexpectedly at the bottom, as to make it seem that Mr. Chisel had lost the best part of his legs in some hot engagement, and was walking upon segments or slices of the same. Nevertheless, immense buckles denoted the place where knees should have been, and a huge pair of jack boots, that threatened to swallow Mr. Chisel's whole person, monstrous as it was, were the only positive evidences of such members that could be discovered. In the neighborhood of the knee-buckles, long knots of yellow riband curled about his person, like a nest of playful garter-snakes, and at the heels of the huge jack-boots,

two spurs, with rowels somewhat less than small coach-wheels, thrust themselves forth. Under his right arm the valiant Chisel sustained an awful two-handed sword (fabricated of lath and painted the color of steel), with a green grip; and at his left side a gaping scabbard of calf-skin dangled as he walked.

After Mr. Chisel, at an humble distance, and bearing about the same relation to him as a lean, starveling sexton, following at the heels of a round-bellied, well-kept rector, came a withered little man, christened Tommy Snipe, by his parents, but rebaptized by the vulgar, Dried Snipe. This gentleman possessed a paper face, with a thin nose, that very unjustly inclined to the right ear, and a person which might be reasonably expected to correspond with such promising upper-features. He took upon himself the task and burden of personating the age of George II.; wearing a dark brown pigtail, a wide-skirted coat, reaching to the knees, with ruffles at the wrist; a long vest with large pocket-flaps underneath, and snug pantaloons ending in pumps, adorned with knots of riband. But he was sadly out in his costume, by mounting on his head a sugar-loaf hat, and bearing in his hand a clumsy old pistol, managed by a wheel-lock, with its works all at the muzzle, like the brains of a garrulous fellow, all in his tongue. I doubt whether the throats of those old iron orators ever spoke to much purpose. Into one of his coat-pockets he slyly insinuated a half-filled powder-flask and shot-pouch, for the purpose, perhaps, of practising with his resuscitated pistol, upon a few of Mr. Joshua Jolton's tame pigeons on the way home, if the adventure should chance to miscarry.

Behind Mr. Snipe, Harry Harvest strutted the ambitious representative of a still earlier reign. His head was covered with a low, broad-brimmed beaver, cocked on one side, one corner of which had been knocked out by a roundhead broadsword, with a dull, dirty feather winding about its crown. The expressive countenance of Mr. Harvest shone out from amid a fertile perriwig that flowed in a complete torrent of hair down his shoulders, like the man in the moon in a cloudy night. In his left hand he wore a smart sword, crossing a gay doublet, reaching to the top of a pair of wide stockings, tagged up with points: a set of petticoat breeches, and a few yards of lutestring, completed the dress.

Thus accoutred, they glided noiselessly from the old building, and stole around a ledge of rocks, into a green lane, which was shaded by trees and straggled along the margin of a brook for something like a furlong. Here the pleasant by-way ended, and they found themselves in the edge of an oak woods, pursuing an obscure footpath, which sometimes broadened into an open space, and again narrowed to a track scarcely sufficient for the passage of Mr. Samuel Chisel.

As they travelled, the journey was lightened by occasional extravagantly authentic stories,

narrated to the worthy just named, by Bob Bobbylink—interspersed now and then, with a rough cudgel-play of wits between Dried Snipe and Hank Harvest; enlivened still more at intervals, by a series of mutual tricks, practised upon each other all round. At times Habbakkuk Viol, the mad Hessian, would discover as he stooped to drink of some passing stream, an ominous goose-quill stuck in his jacked leather helmet, vying with his more regular trooper's feather. Again a rapid series of sudden and invisible kicks would descend upon the swelling flank of Sam. Chisel, with such velocity and fury, as to shake his physical commonwealth to its centre. Dried Snipe being a tetchy little fellow, was frequently set upon and sorely badgered by some one of the party.

"I think," said the gentleman who represented the seventeenth century on this occasion, addressing himself to Tommy Snipe, "when I undertook to rob a henroost, I wouldn't mistake a patriarcal cock, for a maiden pullet; you are so valiant, Snipe, you should have known him by his spurs!"

"I knows what I know," retorted Mr. Snipe. "If it had been you, I might have known you to be a tender bird by your soft coxcomb!"

"Well answered, Dried Snipe!" quoth the company halting in a cleared space, and gathering about the disputants (Bobbylink advancing alone on a lookout). Quip and reply now rapidly passed between the contending parties, until at length the tetchy Mr. Snipe was exasperated beyond endurance, by Harry Harvest's alluding to his features, in connexion with the appearance presented by the physiognomy of a dried codfish suddenly animated. At this unsavory and pointed insinuation the gentleman representing the middle of the eighteenth century, in his style of dress, grew exceeding wroth, and would have done terrible damage to the person and habiliments of him of the seventeenth, by drawing from his pocket his small powder-flask, and proceeding to load his venerable pistol, had not fate interposed, and by the hand of John Smally, forcibly plucked the brown wig from the head of the valorous Snipe: whereupon his sugar-loaf hat slid over his face, very much like an enormous extinguisher. In this tomb his valor was effectually buried for the present. Meantime Mr. Harry Harvest had drawn his trusty rapier, but was prevented from a very dexterous employment of the same, by the sudden descent of Sam. Chisel's trenchant blade of lath upon his head, which caused his eyes to emit sufficient sparks and flashes, to fire a whole field of artillery.

And now the gentlemen of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were completely at the mercy of their more modern comrades, and might have been speedily put to death by the numerous ingenious tortures practised upon them, while thus doing penance in the dark, had not Bob Bobbylink at that moment returned, exclaiming, with sparkling eyes, "the signal is ho! out!" which being readily under-

stood by the party, caused a supple adjustment of all difficulties, a general and generous forgiveness of injuries, and they resumed the march.

In a moment or two they had emerged from the woods, and casting their eyes toward the east, discovered a long stripe of red flannel flying at the head of a well-pole. The sight of this signal inspired the freebooting varlets with feelings similar to those which filled the breast of the adventurous Vasco de Gama, on obtaining the first view of the Pacific from a peak of the Andes; for to Viol, Bobbylink, & Co., it opened visions of whole seas of cider, and mountains of mutton and roast beef. They had now arrived in an orchard in the rear of the dwelling, whose roof covered the wedding-dinner, which was the grand object of their adventure, and the wedding-party had just seated themselves at the table to do justice to its various excellence. While the dinner-hunters are discussing the most expedient order of entrance and assault, we will appropriate a few words of description to the objects we have mentioned.

At the head of a long table, then, in a comfortable sitting-room, looking out upon a garden, was seated a round-faced, short man, in a new brown coat, with light brass buttons, and at his side, a red-cheeked, dumpy girl, in a new pink frock, and a pair of blue eyes, in capital order. At the opposite extremity of the board sat two aged females, old Aunt Anderson, the grandmother of the bridegroom, and at her left, Aunt Frewell Tomkins, the corresponding relative of the bride. Along the sides of the table were seated Parson Hob, a Methodist clergyman, in an ill-cut suit of black, in the centre, with the mothers of the bride and groom, and two or three rustic female cousins, as wings; opposite the preacher sat the bride and bridegroom's grandfathers, flanked in like manner on each side with the male parents of the interesting couple, whose individual interests had been merged in a co-partnership for life, with a like number of male cousins to tally with the females mentioned. This interesting company had just arranged itself, as we have described, about a well-filled board, when a loud knock was heard at the door, and, without further warning, a man with an iron-bound military cap on his head, and a heavy blunderbuss in his hand, stepped into the apartment.

He grounded his arms with a martial air, and, leaning over the muzzle, looked around upon the wedding-party with great coolness and severity of countenance. The first one to speak on the appearance of this unexpected figure was Aunt Anderson. "My God!" said she, "I believe it's a Hessian!" and suddenly seizing her spectacles from the table and placing them to her eyes, she shrieked, "It is! yes, it is one of those wild war-fellows of the revolution!" and dropping her glasses upon the floor, she rushed precipitately out of the room.

By this time, a second figure had made itself visible. This was a pale, sepulchral person-

age, in a blue cap and coat, who tottered feebly into the apartment with a cane in his hand, and took his station a little in advance of the military apparition. "Good gracious!" now shrieked Hetty Steddle, a pretty servant-girl, who was in waiting, "Lor' bless me, if that ben't the ghost of old Shekkels!" and with a hideous noise she followed the example of withered Aunt Anderson. "It must be the spirit of the old Jew Shekkels!" said the two old grandfathers almost in the same breath, rising from the table, placing their hands upon the cloth, and peering anxiously forward into the face of the man in the blue coat and cap. A general panic had now seized the company; the dumpy bride succeeded, after two or three ineffectual attempts, in fainting, and was borne in the arms of the short man in the round face, aided by two or three stout boors, into the fresh air. The clergyman had taken advantage of the open door, and suddenly disappeared, none could tell (if they cared) whither. The females in a body fled the haunted table, followed by the bridegroom's father between the two venerable grandsires, dragging them out by the collar with main force. Just as the last one of this fugitive party of weddingers had vanished through one door, their places were supplied at another by our friends Sam Chisel, Harvest, Snipe, and Smally, who were equally disposed, with them, to do justice to the yet untasted meal before them. First, the Merry-makers then indulged in a sort of subdued horse-laugh all round. Next, the door was secured by John Smally and Sam Chisel with two short bayonets thrust an inch deep or more in the lintels; and then they arrayed themselves with all despatch about the smoking board.

According to an ancient custom that prevails in that region, the wedding-company had established themselves at the table before the knives and forks were laid at the plates: that being a service generally rendered by a negro or maid-servant immediately after grace. Our bold adventurers accordingly found themselves sadly at a stand for lack of these indispensables: all except Mr. Harry Harvest, who plied his rapier, of the middle of the seventeenth century, with great dexterity at the ribs of a roasted turkey, and Mr. Chisel, whose lath-sword did serviceable execution upon pudding and apple-sauce—shovelling huge streams of the latter down his throat, seasoned with draughts from a neighboring cider-pitcher. But the exploits of these two trenchermen scarcely satisfied the clamorous bellies of Dried Snipe, Smally, Habakkuk Viol, and Bob Bobbylink.

The latter worthy, therefore, rising, and catching a brace of fine broiled woodcocks by the legs, and thrusting them into his coat-pocket, exclaimed, "Clear the deck, my lads!—we'll adjourn the dinner to head-quarters!" And saying this, he seized upon two bottles of currant-wine and a fat fowl, and thrust them into a long bag that he had secretly brought with him, to show them what he meant.



Thereupon a scene of awful and indiscriminate pillage ensued. Habakkuk Viol first filled his blunderbuss with cider to the muzzle, plugging it in with a roll of hot bread, and afterward stuffed a duck into either pocket. Sam Chisel next cast out two sheaves of straw from his bosom, and basted his green jacket with a monstrous chicken pie, a dish of apple-sauce, and a leaden-covered pitcher of fresh-brewed ale; filling the steeple of his hat with hot rolls and other dainties, his jack-boots with radishes and roasted apples, and his calf-skin scabbard with pudding-sauce and drawn butter. An enormous turkey was severed and shared with Dried Snipe, who, besides this moiety, lined his gaberdine with bread and cakes, and clapped a blackberry pudding in his sugar-loaf hat, with a small plate at bottom to sustain it. The immense vest-pockets of John Smally were forthwith freighted each with a comely loaf of pot-cheese, and into the skirts of his Dutch coat he slid a goodly tongue, whispering to Bobbylink, "This, you and I will secretly divide!" As for Harry Harvest, he was desperately fond of greens, and took charge of the vegetable department; and accordingly crammed his Charles Second doublet and petticoat-breeches between the lining with beans, peas, asparagus, and ears of early corn. Thus armed and provisioned, these gallant cruisers cautiously undid the door, and stole warily from harbor without being seen; for the whole wedding-party had fled into the crib, which was on the other side of the house, and there they kept themselves in a state of siege—the short bridegroom having ascended into the loft of the same, and planted his round face at a loophole in the end, maintaining a brilliant and steady lookout, with all his eyes, toward the front of the building.

The Merry-makers soon attained the woods, and Bob Bobbylink, looking cautiously back, saw the pretty serving-girl, Hetty Steddle, standing under a cow-shed in the road, holding her hips, and ready to burst with laughter, as she gayly winked and waved her hand to him.

The next morning, the same shabbily-dressed crew to which we introduced our readers might have been seen lurking about the old out-house, basking in the sun as before, but with improved visages, sleek with the fruits of their yesterday's adventure.

## THE GREAT CHARTER CONTEST IN GOTHAM.

ILLUSTRATING THE CONNEXION BETWEEN PATRIOTISM AND SILK STOCKINGS, AND CACOGRAPHY AND POPULAR RIGHTS.

THERE is a particular season of the year in the city of New York, when ragamuffins and vagabonds take a sudden rise in respectability; when a tarpaulin hat is viewed with the same

mysterious regard as the crown of an emperor, and the uncombed locks of a wharf-rat or river-vagrant looked upon with as much veneration as if they belonged to Apollo in his brightest moments of inspiration. At this singular and peculiar period in the calendar, all the higher classes, by a wonderful readiness and felicity of condescension, step down from their pedestals, and smilingly meet the vulgar gentry, half way up, in their progress to the beautiful table-land of refinement and civilization.

About this time gloves go out of repute, and an astonishing shaking of dirty fists takes place all over the metropolis. It is a sight to electrify the heart of a philanthropist, to behold a whole community in a state of such perfect Arcadian innocence, that all meet on terms of familiar affection, where smile responds to smile, with equal warmth—though one may dimple a clean countenance, and the other force its pellucid way through a fog of earthy particles. Happy, golden time!

Reader, if you chance not to comprehend philosophically this sweet condition of things, be informed that a charter election comes on next month!

The charter contest of the year eighteen hundred and ——, is perhaps the fiercest on record in the chronicles of New York. Several minor skirmishes took place with regard to aldermen, assessors, and constables; but the main brunt and heat of the engagement fell upon the election of a mayor to preside over the portentous destinies of the metropolis during a twelvemonth.

It seemed, from the grounds on which it was fought, to be the old battle of patrician and plebeian. On one side, the candidate was Herbert Hickock, Esquire, a wholesale auctioneer, and tolerably good Latin scholar: a gentleman who sallied forth every morning at nine o'clock from a fashionable residence in Broadway, dressed in a neat and gentlemanly suit of black, an immaculate pair of gloves, large white ruffles in his bosom, and a dapper cane in his hand.

Opposed to him, as a candidate for the mayoralty, was a master shoemaker, affectionately and familiarly known as Bill Snivel. He was particularly celebrated for the amount of unclean garments he was able to arrange about his person—a rusty, swaggering hat, and a rugged style of English with which he garnished his conversation. The great principles on which the warfare was waged were, on the one hand, that tidy apparel is an indisputable evidence of a foul and corrupt code of principles; and on the other, that, to be poor and unclean, denotes a total deprivation of the reasoning faculties.

So that the leading object of the Bill Snivel party seemed to be, to discover Mr. Hickock in some act of personal uncleanness or cacography; while the Hickock party as strenuously bent all their energies to the detection of Mr. Bill Snivel in the use of good English or unexceptionable linen. The names with which they



mutually christened each other exhibit the depth and strength of their feelings on this point. The one was known as the Silk-stockings Gentry: the other by the comprehensive appellation of the Loafers.

At the approach of a New York charter election, it is truly astonishing how great a curiosity springs up as to the personal habits of the gentlemen presented on either side as candidates. The most excruciating anxiety appears to seize the community to learn certain little biographical incidents as to their birth, parentage, morals, and the everyday details of their life. In truth, on this occasion, the wardrobe of one of the nominees had been so often and so facetiously alluded to by two or three of the newspapers, that the Bill Snivel general vigilance committee had felt it their duty to furnish one of their members with a large double telescope—which he planted, by resolution of the committee, every night and morning directly opposite the chamber-window of Herbert Hickock, Esquire, with the laudable purpose of discovering, in an authentic way, what were that candidate's habits of dress. A manuscript report of his ingenious observations, it is said, was circulated freely among the members of the committee. No copy, that I have learned, has ever found its way to the press. As every one knows, the advent of an election creates a general and clamorous demand for full-grown young men of twenty-one years of age. To meet this demand, a surprising cultivation of beards took place among the Hickock youth who happened to want a few days or months of that golden period.

Furthermore, a large number of the Bill Snivel voters in the upper wards of the city, became suddenly consumptive, and were forced to repair, for the benefit of their health, to the more southern and genial latitudes of the first, second, and third wards; and the Hickock men residing in those wards were seized as suddenly with alarming bilious symptoms which compelled them to emigrate abruptly to the more vigorous and bracing regions in the northern part of the island. Pleasant aquatic excursions, too, were undertaken by certain gentlemen of the Bill Snivel tinge of politics (whose proper domicils were at Hartford and Haverstraw), and they came sailing down the North and East rivers, in all kinds of craft, on visits to their metropolitan brethren, and dropped their compliments in the shape of small folded papers, in square, green boxes with a slit in the top.

To keep up the spirit of the contest, several hundreds of the silk-stockings men packed themselves regularly every night into a large, oblong room, and presented a splendid collection of fine coats and knowing faces—like a synod of grave herrings in a firkin—to the contemplation of sundry small men, with white pocket-handkerchiefs and bad colds, who, in turn, came forward and apostrophized a striped flag and balcony of boys on the opposite wall.

Certain other hundreds of the Bill Snivel

men regaled themselves in a similar way, in another large, oblong room, except that the gentlemen who came forward to them served themselves up in spotted silk handkerchiefs—voices a key louder—noses a thought larger—and faces a tinge redder than their rivals. The former occasionally quoted latin and the latter took snuff. With regard to the noises which now and then emanated from the lungs of the respective assemblages—there was more music in the shouts and vociferations of the Hickock meetings—more vigor and rough energy in the Bill Snivel. If a zoological distinction might be made, the Bill Snivel voice resembled that of a cage-full of hungry young tigers, slightly infuriated; while the Hickock seemed to be modelled on the clamor of an old lion after dinner. Each meeting had some particular oratorical favorite. In one, a slim man was in the habit of exhibiting a long, fallow face at 8 o'clock every evening, between a pair of tall sperm candles, and solemnly declaring that—the country was ruined, and that he was obliged to pay twelve and a half cents a pound for liver! At the Bill Snivel, a short, stout man, with an immense bony fist, was accustomed, about half an hour later, to appear on a high platform—and announce in a stentorian voice that "the people was on its own legs again," which was rather surprising when we know how fond some people are of getting into other people's boots; and that "the democracy was carrying the country before it," which was also a profound postulate, meaning—the democracy was carrying the democracy before it—they constituting the country at all times, and the country at all times constituting them!

In the meantime, committee-men of all sorts and descriptions are at work in rooms of every variety of wall and dimension. The whole city is covered with hand-bills, caricatures, manifestoes, exposures, pointed facts, neat little scraps of personal history, and various other pages of diverting political literature. Swarms cluster about the polls; banners stream from windows, cords, and housetops. A little man rides about on the box of an enormous wagon, blowing a large brass trumpet, and waving a white linen flag with a catching inscription—and he labors at the trumpet till he blows his face out of shape, and his hat off his head, and waves the flag until it seems to be a signal of distress thrown out by the poor little man with the brass trumpet, just as he has broken his wind and is sinking with exhaustion. Scouring committees beat furiously through the wards in every direction. Diving, like sharks, into cellars, they bring up, as it were between their teeth, wretched, scarecrow creatures, who stare about when introduced to daylight as if it were as great a novelty to them as roast-beef. Ascending into garrets, like mounting hawks, they bear down in their clutches trembling old men, who had vegetated in those dry, airy elevations apparently during a whole century. Prominent among the bustling busy-bodies of

the hour is Fahrenheit Flapdragon, member of the Hickock general committee, the Hickock vigilance ward committee, the advertising committee, the wharf committee, the committee on flags and decorations, the committee on tar-barrels and tinder-boxes, one of the grand general committee on drinking gin-slings and segar-smoking, and member of the committee on noise and applause. By dint of energetic maneuvering, Flapdragon had likewise succeeded in being appointed chairman of a single committee, viz., that on chairs and benches. He attained this enviable elevation (the performance of the arduous duties of which drew upon him the eyes of the whole ward and the carpenter who furnished the benches!) through the votes of a majority of the committee of five—one of whom was his brother-in-law and the other his business partner. The casting vote he had himself given judiciously, in his own favor. Fahrenheit Flapdragon bore a conspicuous part in the great charter contest, now waging between Hickock and Snivel. In fact, he was so embarrassed with engagements during this hot-blooded election, that he was compelled to furnish himself with a long-legged gray horse early on the morning of the second day, to carry him about with sufficient rapidity from point to point to meet them as they sprang up. The little man, of a truth, was so tossed and driven about by his various self-imposed duties in the committee-rooms, streets, and along the wharves, that he came well nigh going stark mad. During the day he harried up and down the streets, from poll to poll, bearing tidings from one to the other—distributing tickets—cheering on the little boys to shout, and placing big men in the passages to stop the ingress of Bill Snivel voters; I say during the day he posted from place to place on his lank, gray nag with such fury that many sober people thought he had lost his wits and was hunting for them on horseback in this distracted manner.

At night, what with drinking gin-slings and brandy-and-water at the bar to encourage the vagabonds that stood looking wistfully on—talking red-hot Hickock politics to groups of four or five and six—and bawling applause at the different public meetings he attended—he presented, at the close of the day's services, such a personal appearance that any one might supposed he had stayed in an oven till the turning point between red and brown arrived, and then jumped out and walked home with the utmost possible velocity to keep up his color. There are seventeen wards in the city, and every ward has its Fahrenheit Flapdragon.

While these busy little committee-men are bustling and hurrying about, parties of voters are constantly arriving on foot, in coaches, barouches, open wagons, and omnibuses, accompanied by some electioneering friend who brings them up to the polls. Every hour the knots about the door swell until they fill the street. In the interior of the building, meanwhile, a somewhat different scene presents itself. Be-

hind a counter, on three wooden stools, three men are perched, with a green box planted in front of the one in the centre, and an officer with a staff at either end. The small piece of green furniture thus guarded is the ballot-box, and all sorts of humanity are every moment arriving and depositing their votes. Besides the officers, two or three fierce-looking men stand around the box on either side, and challenge, in the most determined manner, every suspicious person of the opposite politics. "I dispute that man's vote," says one, as a ragged young fellow with a dirty face and strong odor of brandy approaches; "I don't believe he is entitled to vote." "Yes, he is," replies another, "I know him—he's a good citizen; but you may swear him if you choose!" At this the vagabond is pushed up to the counter by one of his political friends—his hat is knocked off by an officer—the chief inspector presents an open bible—at which the vagabond stares as if it were a stale codfish instead of the gospels—a second friend raises his hand for him and places it on the book, and the chief inspector is about to swear him—when the Hickock challenger cries out, "Ask him if he understands the nature of an oath!" "What is an oath?" asks the inspector, solemnly. "D—n your eyes!" hiccups the young Bill Snivel voter.

"Take him out!" shouts the inspector, and the officers in attendance, each picking up a portion of his coat-collar, hurry him away with inconceivable rapidity through a back-door into the street, and dismiss him with a hearty punch with their staves in the small of his back.

All over the city, wherever a square inch of floor or pavement can be obtained—in bar-rooms, hotels, streets, newspaper offices—animated conversations are got up between the Hickock gentry and the Bill Snivel men.

"If dandy Hickock gets in," says a squint-eyed man with a twisted nose, "I've got a rooster pigeon—I'll pick his feathers bare—stick a pipe-stem in his claw, friz his topknot—and offer him as a stump candidate for next mayor."

"Can your rooster-pigeon spell his own name, Crossfire?" asked a tall Hickock street-inspector—"if he can't, you'd better put him a quarter under Bill Snivel; it would be as good as an infant school for him!"

"I think I'd better take my little bantam-cock," retorted the squint-eyed man, "he's got a fine comb, which would answer for shirt-ruffles;" and the Bill Snivel auditors gave a clamorous shout.

"If he's got a comb," said the tall inspector, stooping toward the shouters, "it's more than what Bill Snivel's head has seen this two and forty years!" The Hickock gentry now sent up, in turn, a vigorous hurrah; and a couple of ragamuffins in the mob, who had been carrying on a little under-dialogue on their own account, now pitched into each other in the most lively manner, and after being allowed to phlebotomize each other very freely, were drawn

apart by their respective coat-tails and carried to a neighboring pump.

The battle by no means ceases at the going down of the sun; for, besides the two large assemblages to which we have before alluded, there is, in each ward, a nightly meeting in some small room in the second story of a public house, where about one hundred and fifty miscellaneous human beings are entertained by sundry young attorneys and other spouters, practising the English language and trying the force of their lungs. At these meetings you will be sure, whenever you attend them, to meet with certain stereotyped faces—which are always there, always with the same smiling expression, and looking as if they were a part of the wainscoting, or lively pieces of furniture fixed there by the landlord to please his guests. The smiling gentlemen are office-seekers. In the corner, sitting on a small table, you may observe a large puffed-out man with red cheeks; he is anxious to obtain the appointment of beer-gauger under the corporation. Standing up by the fireplace is a man with a dingy face and shivering person, who wishes to be weigher of coal, talking to a tall fellow who stoops in the shoulders like a buzzard, with a prying nose and eye, and a face as hard and round as a paving-stone, who is making interest for reappointment as street inspector. There is also another, with a brown-tanned countenance, patriotically lamenting the decline of the good old revolutionary spirit—who wants the office of leather inspector.

The most prominent man at these meetings is orator Bog, a personage whose reputation shoots up into a wonderful growth during the three days of election, while his declamation is fresh, but which suddenly withers and wilts away when the heat of the conflict has cooled. His eloquence is the peculiar offspring of those sunny little republican hotbeds, ward meetings.

He has just described the city as "split like a young eel, from nose to tail, by the diabolical and cruel knife of those modern Catilines," the aldermen of the city, they having recently run a main street through it, north and south.

"These are the men," he exclaimed with an awful smile on his countenance, "these are the men that dare insult democracy by appearing in public—like goslings—yes, like goslings!—with such articles as these on their legs!" and thrusting a pair of tongs—heretofore dexterously concealed under the skirts of his coat—into his hat, which stood upon the table before him—he drew out a pair of fine silk stockings and swung them triumphantly over the heads of the mob, which screamed and clamored with huge delight at the spectacle. "And such articles as these!" he shouted, producing, from the same receptacle, a shirt about small enough for a yearling infant, with enormous green ruffles about large enough for a Patagonian.

"Look at it!" cried Bog, throwing it to one of the mob.

"It's pine-shavin's, painted green," shouted the mob.

"Smell of it!" cried Bog.

"It's scented with assy-fetid-y!" vociferated the ecstatic Bill Snivel men, and a hearty burst of laughter broke forth.

Several lusty vagabonds came near going into fits when Orator Bog facetiously, though gravely, stopped his nose with his thumb and finger and remarked, "I think some one has brought a skunk into the room!"

The last hour of the last day of the great charter contest has arrived. Every carman, every merchant's clerk, every negro with a freehold, every stevedore, every lamplighter, every street-sweeper, every vagrant, every vagabond, has cast his vote.

Garret, cellar, sailor's boarding-house, shed, stable, sloop, steamboat, and dockyard, have been ransacked, and not a human being on the great island of Manhattan has escaped the clutch of the scouring and district committees of the two great contending parties. At this critical moment, and as the sun began to look horizontally over the chimney-tops with a broad face as if he laughed at the quarrels of Hickcock gentry and Bill Snivel men, two personages were prowling and prying along a wharf on the East river, like a brace of inquisitive snipe.

At the self-same moment the eyes of both alighted on an object floating in the water, at the self-same moment both sprang forward with a boat-hook in his hand, and fastened upon the object of their mutual glances, one at the one extremity, the other at the other. In a time far less than it takes the north star to twinkle, the object was dragged on shore and proved to be the body of a man, enveloped in a fragmentary blue coat, roofless hat, and corduroy pantaloons.

"I claim him," said one of the boat-hook gentlemen, a member of the seventh ward Hickcock wharf committee; "I saw him first! he's our voter by all that's fair!"

"He wants a jugful of being yours, my lad," retorted the other, a member of the Bill Snivel wharf committee. "He's too good a Christian to be yours—for don't you see he's just been baptized?"

"He's mine!" responded the Hickcock committee-man, "for my hook fastened in his collar, and thereby saved his head—he couldn't vote without his head!"

"A timber-head he must have if he'd vote the shirt-ruffle ticket," retorted the Bill Snivel committee-man.

By this time a mob had gathered about the disputants, who stood holding the rescued body each by the leg, with its head downward to let the water drain from its windpipe.

"Why, you land-lubbers," cried a medical student, pushing his professional nose through the throng, "you'll give the man the apoplexy if you hold him that way just half a minute longer." In a trice after, a second medical student arrived, and, hearing what the other had said, exclaimed, "It's the best thing you can do—hold him just as he is, or he's sure to get the dropsy." The mob, however, interfered—the

man was laid on his back—and one of the medical students (who was propitious to the Hickock code of politics) taking hold of one wrist—and the other (who advocated the Bill Snivel system) seizing the other, they commenced chafing his temples, and rubbing the palms of his hands.

The wharf committee-men, meantime, felt inclined to renew the dispute as to their claim on the body of the half-drowned loafer, but, by advice of the medical gentlemen, it was deferred to be settled by the man's own lips, whenever he should recover the use of them. The medical students chafed and rubbed, and every minute leaned down to the ear of the drowned body, as if to catch some favorable gnos-sis. "Hurrah for Hickock!" shouted the man, opening his eyes just as one of the medical students had withdrawn his mouth from his ear. The Hickock portion of the mob gave three cheers. "Hurrah for Bill Snivel!" shouted the resuscitated loafer as the other medical student applied his lips to his organ of hearing.

The loafer was now raised upon his legs, and marshalled like some great hero between the medical students and the two members of the wharf committees—and borne toward the polls—having each hand alternately supplied by the Hickock people and the Bill Snivel, with the tickets of the respective parties. They arrived at the door of the election room, with the body of this important and disputed voter, just one minute after sundown, and, finding him thus to be of no value, the Hickock medical student and committee-man, and the Bill Snivel student and committee-man, united in applying their feet to his flanks and kicking him out of the building!

In two or three days the votes of the city were duly canvassed, and it was found that they stood, for Bill Snivel, 13,000—for Herbert Hickock, 13,303—scattering, 20. Three hundred and three learned Bill Snivel gentlemen having, in consequence of their limited knowledge of orthography and politics, voted for Bill Snivel for constable instead of mayor! Herbert Hickock, Esq., was, therefore, declared duly elected Mayor of the city and county of New York.

## THE WITCH AND THE DEACON.

A DEACON WITH A HEART LIKE A WHIRLPOOL,  
AND A GOBLIN WITH A TAIL LIKE A FISH.

**DURING** the close of the seventeenth century the prince of darkness made several very hot inroads into different quarters of the righteous old colonies of New England. In truth, there was so <sup>much</sup> prodigious a descent of devils upon divers places near the centre of this province,\* and it suddenly swarmed in every nook and

corner with such crowds of spectres and goblins, that the good people were in a fair way of being ejected to furnish them a settlement. Never was the devil supplied with so great a variety of recruits. The fierce incursions of which I have spoken were sometimes headed by one captain, sometimes by another. In one quarter the troops were led on by a black man, of a gunpowder aspect, and more than human dimensions. This fellow generally skirmished about the edges of woods and timber-lands, clutching up straggling old beldames and tame Indians. Then there was your tawny-colored goblin, short of stature, who was sometimes seen with a whole pack of spectres hovering at his heels; your pugnacious devil, whose chief sport it was to distribute dry blows liberally about the ears of the poor wretches who came within his jurisdiction; your high-flying devil, who snatched people out of their chambers, and horsed them away miles through the air, over trees and hills, free of postage; beside a large assortment of menial imps, who were drubbed heartily by their employer if they failed to do their vile work to his satisfaction. To these were sometimes added a better-bred class of goblins, who acted as secretaries and book-keepers (at a liberal salary I presume) to the devil, and who had charge of the great red muster-book to which new recruits were forced to put their hands.\* Never was a campaign of old Nick better arranged, or carried on with more spirit.

It was on a night in the year sixteen ninety-seven, and after the smoke and heat of the main engagement at Salem had died away, that a tall woman, about sixty years of age, was crossing a stone fence in the choleric little village of Rye. It was a still, cheerful night, in the close of August, and the moon shone down into the field upon which the aged woman was entering with a brightness so pure that it seemed almost unnatural.

Before her lay an enclosed space of about four acres, stretching up from the edge of a quiet little brook to the brow of a hill, and covered with bushes, shrubs, and herbs, of every description. Near the water's edge a whole company of braggart bulrushes thrust up their heads, and lorded it over the inoffensive and unambitious little stream with an air of vast superiority, while around these topping pretenders a few humble water-cresses gathered themselves, and modestly vegetated and blossomed. Farther on, and along the fence, a testy crew of blackberry bushes had assembled, and stood wagging their heads in every wind that stirred, and near them a malignant poison-vine crept along the rails like a serpent.

As the old woman stepped into the field out of a piece of woods that overhung it from the west, she startled a garter-snake from the bank, and the timid creature, with its light streaks

\* For authority as to these abstruse points, consult "More Wonders of the Invisible World" (1700), tracts pamphlets, and surviving aged females

\* Cotton Mather.

of yellow dashed with spots of blue, twinkled away through the grass toward the brook, leaving behind it, or seeming to leave behind it, as it glided swiftly along, a trail of mixed orange-colored light.

"A better night heart could not wish," muttered the old woman, as she strided into the field; "but where Dick delays I can not guess. He promised to be about through the village with the basket before I could be here by the woods. A slow foot gets a light supper, Dick." Uttering this sententious saying, she bustled about the ground, plucking here and there a handful of some herb or other, and laying it carefully in the lap of her gown. In a few minutes she was joined by a low, strange-looking young man, about twenty years old, who had upon his head a hat which had been perhaps, originally, of the shape of a bell, but which was pinched by time and weather, at the top, until it now resembled a withered winter-pear. On his arm he bore a dilapidated oaken basket.

"Richard, wherefore didst thou tarry? Thou knewest the business was pressing hitherward. The ale you might have tipped at another time!"

"I have not tarried," replied the strange-looking young man, "to guzzle ale in the village, nor to quaff of old Zickland's cider-casks; nor has old Zickland's watch-dog held me, as he did the other night, by the coat-tail."

"What was it, then, that kept thee?" asked the old woman, peering into his face with a look of considerable anxiety and interest.

"No less than that church mastiff, Deacon Brangle, and his yoke-fellow Fishtyke, the elder. They fastened on me with tongue and teeth as I passed the parsonage—and demanded, whither I was going? for what purpose that basket was meant? and whether you was at home to-night?"

"A curse be on the tribe!" said his aged companion lifting her head up until her bowed form was almost erect, and striking a staff which she bore in her hand sharply upon the ground. "An old woman's curse light on the meddlesome interlopers, the children of Belial that will not let the musty taper of an old body's life go out without helping it with a devilish whiff of their pious breath!"

"Curse not so loud, if you please, Aunt Gatty," said the young man, "the big-eared dogs are not far off, I reckon; for I saw them sneak up into the shadow of the fence, as I left 'em, with their faces turned this way."

"If the evil will hear, let them hear," continued Aunt Gatty in a still louder voice in spite of her companion's remonstrance. "I have been hunted like a paynter from Salem to Weathersfield—from Weathersfield to Hartford—through every hole and corner of the colonies—and now they would worry me out of this abiding-place with their horns of Jericho and false shoutings and clamors at my heels?" The wrath of Aunt Gatty now sunk into a sul-

len silence and they proceeded quietly in their labor.

"It's strange, Dick," she said at length in a calmer tone, "that men who spend an hour, morning and arfternoon, one day out of seven to tell how much they love their brethren, will harass an old woman who spends her time in doing the same thing without sayin' anything about original sin or her pious intentions—curing bodies more nor they cure souls, I'll warrant!"

"It's the cock that mounts the fence and splits his throat with crowing that lays no eggs, you know, Aunt Gatty," replied Dick, with a subdued laugh.

"Yes," returned Aunt Gatty, adopting the same strain, "and you know, Dick, how often deacon crow in the woods, visits about, in his black coat, among the birds to see that they're all in a plump, healthy condition"—"Particularly 'bout killing-time!" interposed Dick. Another brief pause now ensued, which was interrupted again by Aunt Gatty's remarking—"I trow, Richard, here is the finest plantain-leaf I've found this many a day: it's broad enough to kiver any galled horse's haunch that ever smarted, or to cure the pinch of the worst witch that ever rode a bean-pole!"

This observation was followed up by a long and elaborate lecture on the various uses to which plantain might be judiciously applied.

"What's this?" asked Dick at the close of her shrewd observations, presenting an herb with a small crooked root, and a smooth green leaf something in the shape of an Indian arrow-head.

"Thou art a pretty fellow, Dick Snickers, to gather yerbs!" said the old woman taking the plant and giving it a hasty examination—"Why, this is nothing more nor less than colt's foot. It 'udn't take a witch to tell thee that, Dick! Come this way, Richard," she continued, sitting down upon a rock in the middle of the field, laying her crutch across her lap, and placing the basket at her side, "it's time that you know'd the properties of yerbs: eighteen, last shearing time, and not able to tell old colt's foot!"

Dick Snickers at this bidding took a seat at her side, and culling from the basket, herb after herb, the old woman expatiated on its qualities with a learned spirit.

"Here's wild yisup, Dick," she said, "you must be kerful to tell it from balsam; which is shorter and more bunch-like at top. It has a pleasant smell, and is a very nice yerb, Dick. Well should I know thee, yisup!" holding a bunch of it up and contemplating it with a fixed and thoughtful eye, "for they gave thee to the poor girl, Maggy Rule, of Salem, that was posset by evil angels. They said, Richard, I was her evil spirit!—poor thing, she's in Heaven now, and can tell whether old Gartred Heer about ever harmed her life, in thought, word, or look!" "Hush!" said Dick Snickers, "I heard some one over there by the sassafras tree."

At that moment the shadow of a man glided behind the trunk of a monstrous black walnut, which overhung the brook; but the shade of the tree prevented his being discerned by either of the parties.

"Pooh!" said the old woman, listening anxiously for a moment, "It's nothing but a dead nut that fell from a dry limb."

"'Tis more than that, Aunt Gatty, I'm sure," responded Dick, "for I heard something cough like a man—and—hark—there's some one answering him over here by the elder-bushes!"

"I hear no noise, Dick; the moon has put the whim into your head—or else—it's nothing more than a couple of hoarse crickets playing under a sorrel patch!"

From some source or other, however, Aunt Gatty had been impressed with the necessity of quitting the spot as speedily as possible and obtaining the shelter of a good roof. She therefore hurriedly closed her lecture, hooked the basket upon her arm, seized her crutch, and, followed by Dick Snickers, hastened away.

The next morning the sun, at an early hour as it shone or rather struggled through a single dusky pane in the eastern side of the vestry room of the old Rye church, fell upon three men seated at a triangular table, each at a side. The silver-mounted cane of one of them lay obliquely across the table, and the hats of all three hung upon wooden pins fixed about the apartment. One of the party was a middle-aged man with a long, dry countenance and a complexion like a mulberry. His coat was buttoned up, in a threatening manner, from waistband to chin, and about his whole person and bearing there was an air of pompous authority. "This matter must be looked to," said he, throwing his head back into his coat collar, advancing his respectable paunch, and placing his hands knowingly under the tails of his coat. "The Lord will not suffer the evil to triumph—nor will I. Blessed be the name of God, he hath given unto us his inspired statutes; and as first deacon of the Congregational meeting-house in Rye, Philip Brangle, will enforce them, even unto the hanging of witches and sorcerers!"

"There I differ from thee, Brother Brangle: I hold that witches should be exterminated by fire and fagot, for thereby the evil angel or spirit is conquered with his own element, yea, even hell-fire!"

This heroic suggestion proceeded from the mouth of Mr. John Fishtyke, elder, and a most singular mouth it was, and still more singular was the whole countenance to which it belonged. Nature, from some unaccountable whim or other, had seen fit to group all the features of Mr. John Fishtyke in the very centre of his face: his nose, eyes, and mouth, were huddled closely together, leaving a very extensive suburb of unsettled visnomy to lie barren beyond. The elder's head from a front view was thus made to resemble the human lineaments painted in the bull's eye of a large target.

"I fancy not," continued the owner of this paradoxical countenance, "being dragged twice through the pond by the same cat. Hanging hath been tried and found of none effect. Were not sorcerers and witches strung up like onions, at Weathersfield and Salem, Deacon Brangle—and what did it avail? Did not witchcraft increase? Did not the lions and bears of hell abound greatly thereafter?—This is pulpit-news!"

"I care not to argue the question at this present season," replied the mulberry-complexioned deacon. "Hung she shall be—If I am Philip Brangle, Deacon—like a dead skunk!"

"If she be not burned, by the grace of God, I will yield up my eldership: burned to a black crust, the foul hag!"

"I have picked the gallows tree; therefore disquiet thyself no further, Elder Fishtyke!" retorted Brangle.

"And I have chosen the fagots for her burning, and they are now cleft in my door yard—so be at ease!"

"Thou art in league with the wretches, I verily fear, Mr. Fishtyke: thou so strongly urgest fire, in which thou knowest (being their natural element) they may live like salamanders!"

"Has it come to this!" exclaimed John Fishtyke, advancing one leg before the other and dashing his fist furiously upon the triangular table, while a general conflagration raged in the unsettled outskirts of his physiognomy, which gradually extended inward kindling his eyes, nose and cheeks until his whole countenance was fairly a-blaze. "Ha! ha! has it come to this, I am colleague of witches—am I?—As true as the Holy One of Israel liveth"—he was proceeding to utter some terrible threat when he was interrupted by the gentleman who occupied the third side of the triangle, who mildly remarked, "Before we proceed to hang or burn the accused, would it not be well to have evidence of her guilt?"

Here was common ground for Brangle and Fishtyke, who were not to be cheated of their victim by the mere want of proofs, and they both broke out together. "Did I not see her last night with her familiar, in Lyon's black meadow," said Brangle, "Giving him hellish instruction in drugs," continued Fishtyke, "confessing that she was Margaret Rule's evil angel," said Brangle, "and that she was the worst witch that ever rode a bean-pole," continued Fishtyke. "What was it she averred concerning the lameness of Lyon's colt's foot?" "That she had a hand in it," answered Fishtyke.

"Pause, if you please, my friends," said the mild man who was the clergymen of the cure or parish—"What look and person had her familiar?"

In reply to this question, Deacon and Elder again broke forth in a common cry—"A huge black man with hair like white wool," said Fishtyke.



"A small white man with black hair," said Brangle.

"He bore an enormous matchlock in his hand," said Fishtyke.

"It was a slim fishing-rod," said Brangle.

"Horns like an ox," continued Fishtyke.

"A sailor's cap close to his head, methought," said Brangle.

"A long tail behind him like a whale."

"A round-about and tight breeches."

"Hold, gentlemen," interposed the mild clergyman—"Be seated, an it please you. Your testimony differs so widely as to the personal appearance of the woman's familiar or goblin, I doubt whether it would be possible for you ever to identify the supposed sorceress herself. We had better proceed to the business of our cure."

"If you please," said the mulberry-faced Brangle, rising with much solemnity, embedding his head in his coat collar, advancing his swag-belly and adjusting his hands beneath his coat-tail as before,—"If you please: the Lord in his righteous and inscrutable providences hath made Philip Brangle a Deacon and head of the Rye Congregational settlement. The duties, the cares, the labors, the anxieties of that station he intends to fulfil until 'Philip Brangle' is indorsed on a silver plate upon his coffin. As to this witch—this vile bosom-friend and ape of the devil—if ocular proof be not sufficient, is there not enough—yea, more than enough of other evidences?"

"As brief as convenient, Deacon Brangle," interposed the mild clergyman.

"Was it longer ago than last Sabbath day," continued Brangle, "that I saw her, at a public meeting—leave the church in haste and forcibly put to the door as she passed out. The devil had sent for her and she must come!"

"It might have been the colic," suggested the mild clergyman.

"On the twenty-second of June last," resumed the Deacon, referring to a gilt-edged note-book that he held in his hand, "did I not hear the sound of a trumpet, from her hovel, late in the evening, summoning a meeting of witches and sorcerers at that place?"

"It was the horn of the stage-driver," said the mild clergyman, "for I received a letter by the same mail. He was detained beyond his hour by a break in the Harlæm bridge."

Nettled by this summary disposal of his charges, he at length exclaimed, as if he expected to settle the question beyond dispute in his own favor, by so cogent an evidence—"Do you tell me, sir, that the fowls of Mr. Deliverance Lyon have not been under diabolical possession ever since this Gad Heerabout came into these parts? Have not many of them gone off the roost and disappeared, none could tell whither! What hath become of that fine cock-turkey—the pride of his yard? Whither have gone his fatted geese and his noble brood of short-legged hens? Evil angels have made way with them, I

fear; they have suffered sorely from spectral visitation."

"More probably converted into chicken-pie and roasted birds, by Mungo Park, his head slave: with Richard Snikkers as an accomplice," suggested the mild clergyman.

"Will you have the woman examined in our presence?" cried Philip Brangle, as a last resort. "I saw her just pass the door."

"To that there can be no reasonable hindrance," answered the clergyman, "if it be done soberly."

Thereupon Messrs. Brangle and Fishtyke prepared to sally forth, arrest Gatty Heerabout, and bring her before the parochial court.

It may be as well to observe in this place, that Dick Snikkers, before the session of the court began, had found his way under the floor of the church—lifted a board, and climbing over the pulpit, landed himself in a little terra incognita of an attic or garret above the small vestry-room, in which it was assembled. Here, through a knot hole, he had listened to all their proceedings and enjoyed the inexpressible pleasure of observing the combustible countenance of Fishtyke, and the mulberry complexion of Deacon Brangle, in their various striking phases.

As soon as the apprehension of Dame Heerabout was named, he had made his way back into the open air—leaped two or three fences—stood in the road before Aunt Gatty—and announced to her their purpose of questioning her in person.

"Let them question," she replied, in answer to Dick's information, standing erect and turning her face toward the church—"I fear no man, face to face, to answer unto the deeds done in the body; as far as man may rightly question. On to the meetinghouse: they shall not be leg-weary nor arm-weary in dragging me to the trial!" Mastering her crutch with a strong hand, and adjusting her bonnet carefully to her head, she marched with a haughty step toward the vestry-room. She arrived at the door just as Brangle had planted his cane upon the ground to take his first step towards her apprehension.

"How is this, Jezebel!" he exclaimed, taking her violently by the wrist; "hast thou the effrontery to approach the sanctuary so nearly as this after leaving it as thou didst last Lord's day."

"Take off that hand," she exclaimed in turn, "or an acquaintance will be gotten up forthwith betwixt my staff and thy head." And so saying she raised her crutch in token of the promised introduction; but Deacon Brangle, unwilling to trespass on her kindness in that particular, speedily dismissed her hand from his grasp.

The whole party was now assembled in the vestry-room.

"Gartred Heerabout," said the mild clergyman, "you have been suspected of witchcraft

by Deacon Brangle and Elder Fishtyke. Whatever I may think of the charges which have been made against you, I was willing that you should be examined in vestry before you were called to answer for your life to the civil magistrate. Deacon Brangle, you may examine her—temperately, if you please!”

“Woman!” began Brangle, mounting to his feet and screwing his countenance into a hard, inquisitorial expression—“Woman! were you not out last night culling drugs, for hellish purposes, in the black meadow? and instructing your familiar goblin in the art of applying those drugs to purposes of sorcery and witchcraft? Answer as you value your soul!”

“Oh God! God!” exclaimed the woman in reply clasping her hands and raising them above her head in an attitude and with an expression of intense supplication—“Merciful God! the very bread that a poor old woman eats, turns bitter in her mouth! My masters,” she continued, dropping her hands heavily upon her breast, and turning her gaze upon the party about the table, “My masters, I am nothing but a poor old herb-gatherer. If to soothe the lonely hours of some broken, sick man, with a simple medicine—a plantain-leaf, a bit of birch bark, or a drink of wild yisuptea, makes Gatted Heerabout a witch, be she a witch to time’s end and yea, for aught I care, to eternity’s end—if such might be!”

“A confession as to the drugs,” cried Deacon Brangle.

“Palpably,” responded Elder Fishtyke—“what says the woman, touching the familiar goblin with her in the meadow?”

“It was Dick Snickers, please your worship,” replied aunt Gatty, with a smile that betrayed something of contempt, “helping me gather the yerbs—and I was telling him the yerbs’ qualities.”

“A fine fable, thou old brass-jawed hag; her soul is in a hopeful way, is it not, think you, brother Fishtyke?” said Brangle, turning to the elder; “she exhibits observable symptoms of a new creature!—Poor wretch, thou hadst better recal what thou saidst last night about the bewitching of Margaret Rule of Salem! out with it!”

“May the gracious One pardon thee for this mistreatment of an old, friendless woman. I never harmed thee—why shouldst thou persecute me? I never laid hand’s-weight on child or chick of thine—why wilt thou smite me with hard words? I am no witch, God knows, but a simple, sarviceful old body, with a soul like yourself, Deacon Brangle, believe it or not as you choose!”

The old woman dropped her head upon her bosom and sobbed audibly and heavily; and the mild clergyman was so much affected by her emotion, that he was forced to turn his head away to conceal a tear.

“A soul like Deacon Brangle!” cried the vestryman, horror-struck with the supposition. “A soul like Deacon Brangle!—thou art fool as well as witch. Begone—it is folly to waste

words in examining such as thee. The rope of the hangman will settle the matter before sun-down—begone!”

In spite of the remonstrance and entreaty of the clergyman, he enforced his command by seizing the old woman and dragging her forcibly toward the door. Her spirit was aroused by this unexpected insult, and, exerting a strength not supposed to belong to her, she threw off his grasp, and, standing proudly erect, exclaimed, “Wo upon thee and thine!—henceforth for ever—wo and wailing without end! Or ever the sun sinks, Gatty Heerabout, mayhap, will be beyond reach of judge or deacon.” With these words she strided calmly and haughtily away.

As she gained the door, Deacon Brangle said, in a hushed and trembling voice, “She is aided by devils, I do believe; Satan, I verily fear, wrenched her arm away from my hold;” and, as she disappeared, he lifted his voice and cried out after her—“Avoid, thou she-devil, in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, avoid!”

As Deacon Brangle wended homeward from the vestry-room, after the close of the morning’s business, he discovered Dick Snickers sitting upon the fence of Rye bridge, whistling with all his might.

He presented to the vision of the deacon a very singular and novel spectacle, having on the upper part of his person a gay white roundabout and pear-shaped hat, and, on his nether extremities, a pair of tight pantaloons, and low, red shoes; and possessing, withal, a nose turned up slightly at the end, which gave a humorous appearance to his visage, and a set of twinkling, black eyes, that kept a bright lookout upon the little, hooked feature just mentioned. Add to this, that he now had both hands forced vehemently into his pockets, and that both cheeks were inflated with the blasts of wind which supplied the clamorous music that reached Deacon Brangle’s ear, and, we may honestly say that he furnished a rare and original object of contemplation.

“Good morrow, your worship,” said Dick Snickers, pausing just long enough in his labor to utter these words, and resuming his musical vocation as soon as they were delivered.

“Good morning, Mr. Snickers,” responded the deacon, darkening his mulberry complexion with an incipient frown, with the expectation of awing Mr. Snickers into silence or a petrification, “you seem to be in fine spirits this morning!”

“Only whistling a little for the consumption,” replied Dick.

“Whistling for the consumption!” exclaimed Mr. Brangle, moderating the severity of his manner, considerably, for his curiosity equalled his pompousness every day in the week, except vestry-meeting days and Sundays, “that’s a very singular remedy, Richard,” said he familiarly.

“Not at all, your worship,” answered Dick, charmed with his style of address, and throwin’



a queer look out of the corner of his eye—"not at all, your worship—we poor folk can't afford to pay the doctor—so we must needs make natur' our mediciner. Now, in the matter of a cold, Deacon Brangle, you'll observe, if you was ever passing through a lane in a mornin' after a chill, rainy night—you'll observe a bird on the end of every stake blowing it out strong through his throat, like a young harry-cane—and what's it for? Why, they've all cotched colds over night, and they're a whistling 'em away!"

At this profound and philosophical explanation, the mulberry countenance of Philip Brangle became amazingly thoughtful—he cast his eyes in meditative glances upon the ground—and his chin sank inquiringly upon the silver-mounted extremity of his walking-stick.

"It's so, your worship," said Dick Snickers, "there can be no doubt on it. I've heard aunt Gatty tell what I've told your worship more than fifty times!"

"A strange woman, that Dame Heerabout," said Brangle, lifting his mulberry features, through which an altogether new expression had suddenly shot. "She's always observing nature, I suppose, Richard? Night and day, are, no doubt, all the same to her in pursuit of this useful knowledge—is it not so, Mr. Snickers?"

"Does your worship observe anything green in my left orb?" responded Mr. Snickers, employing a very elegant species of interrogatory, which is ignorantly supposed to have sprung up in these latter days, whereas, it was a common topic of conversation in Æsop's time, between the currant-bush and the gooseberry.

This question seemed to be so peculiarly pointed and pertinent, as to awaken Mr. Brangle's most powerful feelings in reply; and, hastily converting his mulberry into a deep red, he exclaimed—"Thou beggarly scamp! how darest thou talk in this way to Philip Brangle, first Deacon of the Rye Congregational church? I'll teach thee what becomes such fellows:—You are hereby summoned to appear before the parochial vestry of our church on Thursday afternoon next, at ten o'clock in the morning, to answer for contempt of one of its officers," and he handed to Mr. Snickers a printed summons, regularly filled up, with his own name inserted.

Mr. Dick Snickers received the document, and immediately, tearing two circular holes in it, placed it in a very expressive manner across his nose to mimic spectacles, and commenced whistling a psalm-tune. Deacon Brangle had cast his eye back to see how his decisive service of a church-warrant had operated on the nerves of Dick Snickers, just as that young gentleman had opened his concerto in glasses.

The sight was too much for the pious Brangle, and, striding swiftly back, he cried out—"I'm the vestry myself; I'll settle the contempt on the spot; boy, I will wring thy nose!" Saying this, he darted upon that organ of Dick Snickers like a pike-fish upon a fresh bait.

"And I'll wring yours!" retorted Dick Snick-

kers, darting upon the same feature of Mr. Brangle. Of the two, Snickers might be considered the more successful, as he did fasten upon the knob of Mr. Brangle's face, whereas, Mr. Brangle merely managed to pass his thumb and finger over the extremity of a smooth willow whistle, which hung at one of Dick Snickers' button-holes. However, he performed the whole ceremony on it with the same hearty honesty as if it had been the genuine organ, Dick Snickers, meantime, pulling away at the real nose in admirable and muscular style.

At length Snickers drew off, and Brangle drew off, carrying with him a nose as red as a brick with pulling, and Dick Snickers' willow whistle between his fingers.

"Egad!" said the deacon, with a horrible chuckle, as he drew out the latter article, which he had unconsciously thrust into his coat-pocket—"I believe I've pulled the fellow's nose off. Ah!" starting back with a monstrously chopp-fallen countenance, "what have we here—the fellow's baby-whistle. It can't be that I was tugging at this all the time," and an awful sensation thrilled through his mind; "it must be, I thought the scamp had got a strange notch in his nose!" With this last observation he abruptly pitched the toy over a stone fence into the bushes, and hurried away meditating revenge, and still more resolved to push the matter against Gatty Heerabout, in whose plans this irreverent dog seemed to be an accomplice. It may be well, however, to observe, that in carrying his schemes into effect he was doomed to lose the valuable aid and co-operation of Mr. Fishtyke; for that exemplary gentleman had refused to have anything further to do with the affair, when he found it impossible to obtain a compromise suggested by him, by which Gatty Heerabout was to be "first burned to a crispy or roasted-pig brown, and then hung by the neck till dead!" He therefore broke off all connexion with Deacon Brangle, vaunting that he would, before long, get a witch to prosecute on his own account!

As the sun sloped toward the west on the afternoon of that same day, and as broad masses of its light entered the open door of a crumbling cottage, or rather hovel, which stood upon the brow of a hill, overlooking Rye, they fell upon the form of old Gartred Heerabout, sitting in a rush-bottomed chair, with a bible spread open on her knees. The excitement of long-continued persecution and the sense of insult attached to the charge of witchcraft, together with a strong natural sensibility of character, appear to have at length affected her reason, and as she sat lonely and unfriended in her hovel, her mind poured itself out in reminiscences of an earlier and happier period of life, mingled with bitter denunciations and gloomy forebodings of some dreaded event near at hand.

"The Lord will deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor!" she exclaimed, adopting the phraseology of scripture. "He is against thee, oh inhabitant of the valley!"

Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in Beshan. Wo be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. Do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless"—and then she broke abruptly into a different strain.

"Ah Dick, Dick, would that Enoch Heerabout were now living—he was a comely man, Dick, and would have been a good father to thee, and thou shouldst have borne his name, witch's son or no—those were brave days when Enoch came a-wooing:

"Were he as poor as Job,  
And I in a royal robe—  
Made Lord of all the globe,  
He should be mine!"

"It's a long day that has no sunset—the sun looks blood-red—what can that mean?" she exclaimed, starting to the door and gazing with a wild and fixed eye upon the declining luminary, which was just wheeling its broad and lurid orb into the bosom of an oak forest that crowned a distant height.

At that moment an ominous sound reached her ear—the long, shrill whistle of Dick Snikkers or more properly Dick Heerabout, followed by the tramp of horsemen and the hurtling, confused noise of a multitude drawing near. In an instant more, a large crowd of men, women, and children, appeared at the foot of the hill with fiery and eager faces turned towards her, and foremost among them she described Philip Brangle with two officers on horseback. The old woman stood rooted and motionless on the threshold, gazing down upon the populace with a look where madness and a certain native heroism of character mingled, partly in wrath, partly in scorn. For a moment the undaunted front and noble mien of the accused old woman held them silent and immoveable, but this feeling soon vanished.

"Seize the hag!" cried Deacon Brangle, "tie her hand and foot—see if she will beard the vestry again!"

At this order two muscular and fierce-looking men dismounted and led the way up the hill, followed by Brangle, who had cautiously thrown himself under the protection of this advanced body. As they approached the house Gatty Heerabout withdrew into the interior and they gained an entrance without opposition or difficulty. When they were within the apartment they discovered her standing erect in its extreme corner holding on high in one hand her bible, while the other was concealed in the folds of her garments; a fierce, supernatural fire kindling in her eyes.

"Execute your warrant on her person!" For a moment they paused again until Deacon Brangle cried out, "Have her in custody forthwith. We must be before the justice ere sun down or we will have no hearing to day!"

Thus urged on, the officers approached the supposed witch, and in an unguarded moment, while her eyes were turned thoughtfully on the

setting sun, they sprang upon her and held her in a firm and apparently invincible gripe.

"Once more vouchsafe thy strength," she exclaimed, after she had recovered from the sudden shock, casting her eyes toward heaven. "Once more only!—Away, ye devils!" she shouted, exerting a giant's strength, casting the stout men from her like children—"I will render my account to God!" And before they could recover their hold she had plucked a dagger from her girdle, plunged it hilt-deep into her bosom—so that its point pierced her heart—and she fell heavy and lifeless to the floor!

Balked of this victim, thus unexpectedly, Deacon Brangle, now gave orders for the apprehension of her accomplice, Richard Heerabout; but he, who had disappeared during the confusion, was nowhere to be found, nor was he ever after seen or heard of in those bewitched and bloody regions!

## DINNER TO THE HON. ABIMELECH BLOWER.

It is a fact, I suspect by this time, pretty generally circulated throughout Christendom, that when an American politician gets to be a great statesman; when he has achieved fame for himself and everlasting glory for his country, and when nothing more can be done to complete his renown, he takes his—dinner! When his constituents have heaped upon him every honor—elected him to the common council—the state legislature—and, finally, expanded him into that full-blown flower of human greatness, a member of Congress—they express their incapacity for any further bestowal of dignities—their sense of the utter hopelessness of any higher elevation of the man in the esteem and admiration of the world, by furnishing him with as much roast-beef and salad as he can eat. Adroit rogues! they manage to be present with the great man at this his public ordinary and masticating exhibition—though absent.

His heavy constituent is served up by proxy, in a surloin; his loquacious one in a calf's head; and his busy, little, young admirer, the clerk or the jeweller's apprentice, in a dish of eels. His mechanical friend comes there in the guise of a stuffed, brown duck, with its back to the plate, sticking up its rough, hard web-feet, as if it would take him stoutly by the hand. Thus do his countrymen incorporate themselves with the mighty statesman, and enjoy the proximate delight of forming the future substance and bulk of their idol.

The dinner to a great man is generally got up by two newspaper editors one lean man, with a long, sagacious nose, and a small boy. The editors announce that "It is the intention of a large number of the constituents of the Honorable Mr. — to give a public dinner to that

man, at the earliest opportunity." The long-nosed, lean man hires the room, and the small boy distributes circulars.

A long-nosed lean man—two editors—and a small boy had performed their part of the business, and the Honorable Abimelech Blower was expected hourly by the afternoon boat, to partake of a public dinner.

The newspapers were in an agony of announcement and expectation; the sun was on fire with impatience; the streets were literally parched and thirsty with suspense. The ticket-holders assumed clean collars and handkerchiefs, and a crowd of anxious expectants was on the wharf straining their optic nerves and exhausting their nautical knowledge in deciphering the craft that came up the bay, and distinguishing butter-sloops from steamboats. The study of river navigation seemed to have become an epidemic.

Several times the crowd thought fit to throw itself into a state of intense and unnecessary excitement.

"There she is—there's the Aurora Highflyer," said a large vagabond, who was bursting from every part of his dress, like an enormous monthly rose.

"It is the Highflyer—Blower's in the Highflyer—I know the Highflyer by her pipe and the way she cuts the water—the committee engaged the Aurora Highflyer to bring on Blower and twelve baskets of Amboy oysters for the dinner!"

The great vagabond had concluded his explanatory comments; the mob stood with its nose in the air and its mouth agape, stretching forward to catch the first glimpse of the distinguished member: the Aurora Highflyer was hidden from view by a brig which was sailing in the same direction and which kept such equal progress as to conceal it for more than ten minutes.

When the brig had arrived nearly opposite the wharf; the supposed steamboat dropped behind her stern and a fellow in a hat-rim standing in her bows, bawled out, "Dash my vitals! them chaps has come down to see the race! Moses and Melchizedec, who'd ha' thought it, Bill?" This facetious personage, in the ardor of a very lively and agreeable fancy, supposed the crowd had collected to witness a match between his mud-scow and the brig Caroline, which had been advertised in one of the penny papers!

At length the Aurora Highflyer did make herself apparent: the mob caught sight of a small man with a mysterious head, who very obligingly stood on the upper deck with his hat off making the most singular and condescending faces at a huge, wooden spile, and bowing obliquely toward the mob.

The mob were, of course, excessively delighted and expressed their feelings as every well-trained mob does, by an extraordinary shout and a still more extraordinary exhibition of hats and caps. The great man landed.

The crowd grew more affectionate and admiring; they pressed closer and closer.

The committee were obliged every minute to exclaim, "for Heaven's sake, gentlemen! don't—you'll crush Mr. Blower!" The great man was finally thrust into a hack—by a broad-handed member of the committee in so forcible a manner that he came very near going through the coach-window at the other side.

A portion of the mob, apparently anticipating this movement, had planted itself on the opposite side of the hack, and obtaining a view of the countenance of the honorable M. C. as it bobbed that way, successfully executed three cheers in a masterly style; the committee mounted in—the door closed, and the hack dashed up the street. When they arrived at the saloon, where the dinner was in waiting, they found the doors surrounded by a dense throng who had assembled to take measure of Mr. Blower's person with their eye and greet him with their most sweet voices. His foot had no sooner struck the pavement than a general "Hurrah for Blower!" split the air, and gave an old woman who was sitting in a window across the way, a very vivid idea of a small earthquake. "Nine cheers and an onion, for Blower!" shouted a discordant gentleman of the opposite politics.

"Give him a smellin'-bottle—the little gentleman's a-fainting!" bawled a second, as Mr. Blower turned pale at the thought of forcing his way to the door through the well-packed mass of people.

"Fan him with a chip!" cried a third.

"Loosen his corsets!" shouted a fourth.

By dint of the active exertions of twelve police-officers with heavy sticks, and four private friends of Mr. Blower, who marched before him kicking the mob on the shins, the Honorable Abimelech Blower was at length safely landed in the room provided for his reception, with the loss of only one gold key out of the bunch at the end of his watch-chain, and one committee-man, who swooned at the presentation of a butcher-boy's fist directly under his nose, and was obliged to be carried home.

Meantime the ticket-holders had rushed into the saloon, and organized themselves by calling a man with a small voice to the chair, and appointing fourteen vice-presidents, each one of the fourteen having a pair of bushy whiskers, and a gold chain slung like a bandit's carbine-belt over his breast. Only a single difficulty arose in arranging the meeting to the entire satisfaction of every one in it, and that was simply that the room was intended to hold one hundred and fifty, and exactly three hundred purchasers of tickets were present. If they should attempt to foist off upon them the amount of dinner they were accustomed to serve up to the number which the room held alone, it was quite clear that some one hundred and fifty good manly voices would be raised to the tune of "Give me back my dollar!" These three hundred gentlemen being concentrated in so

moderate a space, it was rather difficult to decide by what process the Honorable Abimelech Blower was to be established in the chair left vacant for him at the right hand of the President. In fact, this very question came up for discussion in the reception-room.

A significant stamping, like that given at the theatre for the performers to come on, was heard from the saloon and considerably accelerated the deliberations of the committee. Time was pressing. The dinner was spoiling. The Hon. A. Blower began to grow black in the face. A messenger was sent round to learn whether a passage could be made or obtained through the main entrance. He returned, and almost breathless with haste and horror, reported that the fat twins (two celebrated and eminent feeders) were at the door, clamoring to be admitted with their tickets. The committee now began to despair, when a little man timidly suggested that Mr. Blower might be got in, if he would consent, under the stage by the way which the waiters adopted to hand up their wine to those on the platform. Two of the most influential members of the committee ventured to break it to Mr. Blower.

At first he was staggered, but recovering from the shock, and after a brief consultation with his appetite, he agreed to practise the device.

A rumor now reached the saloon that Mr. Blower was approaching. The three hundred hungry gentlemen were awed into silence, and every eye was turned eagerly toward the door of the committee-room, when—unexpected vision—a head—a good sized Sphinx-like oracular head, was put out of a trap-door immediately behind the president's chair. Astonishment seized the three hundred ticket-holders. The head smiled. It was conjectured, by some half dozen among the meeting, to be the head of the Honorable Abimelech Blower. The meeting shouted: the head smiled again. The meeting cheered; the head was followed by a pair of spare withered legs, and the Honorable Abimelech Blower stood before them.

The committee under the platform hurraed and thumped the boards with their canes, as if they were overjoyed at its successful delivery of so great a birth. The rumbling noise under the stage and the sudden appearance of the distinguished M. C. made it seem as if the earth had gaped like another whale, and cast up from its bowels a second Jonah: a very prophet.

Now that Mr. Blower was duly installed in his place of honor, the dinner commenced after a vigorous fashion. Sundry gentlemen in the body of the saloon, appeared to adopt Mr. Blower's countenance as a sort of seasoning for their dishes; for they stole a glance at his expressive features and then took a mouthful; a second glance, a second mouthful, and so on to the end of the course. It gave a relish to their viands. Mr. Blower, himself, fed in gallant style. About him in a semi-circle—a kind of reverential, Druid's stone-arrangement—the

choicest dishes were assembled. A private letter had been addressed to him at Washington by a confidential friend to learn whether he preferred fresh shad or trout: oysters pickled or in the stew, red pepper or black; and also conveying a general inquiry as to the game, wines, &c., which would be most agreeable. In reply he returned a double epistle written twice across giving full and explicit information. With that important state document in their hands, a committee of three had made a circuit of the markets, and been guided by it as strictly and peremptorily as its author professed to be by the sacred charter of the constitution.

The tour of all these edibles Mr. Blower made with the solemnity and thorough self-devotion which befitted the occasion. In his victorious progress he spared no dish; he entered into no truce or compromise with fish, flesh, or fowl; he refused, with a sturdy love of self-enjoyment, to negotiate with anything that stood before him whatever winning shape it might assume.

It was a glorious spectacle to behold Abimelech Blower at his dinner. No wonder, three hundred human beings were willing to be packed, like damaged dry goods, into a small saloon. No wonder they volunteered a dollar a piece to get in. No wonder they patiently endured the heat and suffocation—in truth, almost purgatorial, of a close, narrow room! Abimelech Blower at his dinner was a sight Jupiter might have left his thunder, and Bacchus his cups, to look upon.

Extravagant and improbable as it may seem, the Honorable Abimelech Blower *did* at length finish his dinner—he absolutely brought it to a close! The wine was then introduced. The President thereupon arose, and, in his peculiarly small voice, said that “he felt himself highly honored”—“Louder!” shouted an impudent fellow who had stolen an advance upon the meeting, of three glasses, “he felt himself highly honored in being the instrument to convey to that respectable and intelligent audience, a sentiment which he knew would meet a cordial response in the bosom of every gentleman present. In presenting it, he should say no more than to simply add that the subject of it was a patriot, a scholar, an orator, and a citizen, unrivalled in the four quarters of the globe (cheers). As a patriot he had given his time to his country for the last twenty-five years, at the very moderate rate of eight dollars per day (enormous applause); as a scholar, his pamphlet on the Tonawonda system of cultivating the prairies had gained him immortal honor throughout the whole state of New York (ecstatic vociferations); as an orator, his great speeches on the Panama mission and on the question of conducting the debates in both houses of Congress in the Iroquois, have placed him in an enviable position before the world, beside Demosthenes and Cicero (hysterical hurrahs); as a citizen, you all know him, and love to know that his manly form is the growth—a true native plant—of your own soil!” At

the close of this catalogue of Mr. Blower's excellences irrepressible cheers broke out, like an erysipelas, all over the meeting. The native plant, however, sat rooted to its chair, very quiet and self-composed under this pleasant irrigation; or rather his face seemed to bud forth certain complacent smiles and twinklings which shot about his eyes and the corners of his mouth, like garden fire-works.

"Gentlemen," continued the President in his small, small voice, "I have the honor to offer you, THE HONORABLE ABIMELECH BLOWER. The phoenix of his party, he springs," "louder!" shouted the impudent fellow again,—"The phoenix of his party he springs,"—"louder!" cried the inexorable, impudent man, "I can't," exclaimed the President, pale with smothered rage: nevertheless he proceeded, "he springs from the ashes of corruption which surround him, and, like Hercules tears his" (sh-i-r-t suggested the impudent, drunken man as the president paused in doubt over his paper) "his De-janeiras garment from him and springs into the flame to save his country."

This admirable and explicit toast was received with unbounded demonstrations of applause, and in about two minutes after they had subsided, the meeting took to their bottles and Mr. Blower to his legs.

"Fellow-citizens," said he, calmly withdrawing a large bandanna from his left coat-pocket, "no event of my life is more gratifying to me than this reception: it is the proudest—the very proudest moment of my existence. The sentiment which you have had the kindness to receive so warmly—is only too complimentary, too flattering. To be a phoenix under any circumstances, gentlemen, must be highly gratifying to any man's feelings, but to be the phoenix of the party of which I am an humble advocate, is an honor too great—too overwhelming—for any human being. I thank you, Mr. President and fellow-citizens, for the kind compliment, I thank you with all my heart, and from the bottom of my heart—but I feel—I fear—I am not sure but that I am unworthy of the eulogy." He then proceeded to handle the allusion to Hercules in a similar manner, and in due time came to his system—the great system of which he was the father and promulgator. "As to the system which I have had the honor to advocate, for the last three years—and which I have at length succeeded in carrying through both Houses of Congress by a triumphant majority (cheers)—I allude to the system of Short Commons (continued cheering)—the system which has routed beershops from the capitol and banished gingerbread establishments from the halls of legislation (vociferous applause); as to this system, gentlemen, which I victoriously brought to a third reading, and pushed to a successful decision after a hard-fought and exciting debate of two days and two nights—I shall not enter into its amazing results and consequences at the present time! Its moral bearing upon the destiny of the world—its influence upon the

business of Congress—and the support which it indirectly and collaterally lends to the constitution of the United States—are too obvious to require explanation."

Here the fourteen vice-presidents sprang upon their legs in a body and cheered in magnificent style—a fat reporter in a small gallery behind the speaker grinned—the meeting clamorously hurraed—and an elderly gentleman who couldn't get a seat and wanted exercise, put his hat upon his cane and whirled it around in the air, in a most fascinating manner.

"Mr. President, in urging this great measure upon Congress, I invoked the spirit of liberty to come to my aid—I felt it my duty to invoke that spirit; I called upon the fathers of the Revolution to appear before me, to stalk forth in their grave-clothes upon the floor of the House and animate me in the glorious cause." At this moment a noise of cracked bells and harsh voices from without volunteered to mingle itself with the sound of the speaker's eloquence. "'Appear before me,' I exclaimed," continued Mr. Blower, "'ye heroes and sages, in your funeral shrouds and ghastly visages, and infuse the vigor of your presence into my bosom!'" A tumult was heard at the door—a slight crash, as if a panel or two were resigning their places in the door-frame—an officer's voice was raised in the uproar—and a dozen or two hard-featured fellows rushed in—followed by a miscellaneous throng. They distributed themselves quietly through the gallery, and the speaker, somewhat astonished at this rough parenthesis in the proceedings—continued, suddenly abandoning the track of apostrophe, which he perhaps thought had been full speedily and promptly answered.

"My learned friend," said he, smiling upon the small-voiced President, "has spoken of me, in terms of kind commendation, as a patriot, a statesman, and an orator. But, gentlemen, whatever gratification it may afford me to know that I have been able in my time and in the course of my life to render some service to my country in these capacities ("Cut that man's head off!" shouted the impudent man, who was in his fifth bottle); I feel—I know that my deepest source of satisfaction—that which gives me most consolation and solace, is that, amid all the corruptions and debaucheries of party, I have been enabled to sustain my purity and remain an honest man!" An uproar of applause now burst from every quarter of the room, slightly seasoned and qualified however by the voice of a big, pale man in the gallery.

"Pay me for them Wellingtons you've got on, Blower," shouted the big, pale man, who appeared to be a cobbler, from his complexion and the earnestness with which he demanded an equivalent for the nether integuments of Mr. Blower's person.

"The character of our country, fellow-citizens," continued Blower again rapidly abandoning his train of remark to get on less perilous ground—"The character of our country has been to me a source of anxious attention."

"I'd like to have you settle for those plushes and silk vesting!" modestly suggested a little tailor who was leaning over the railing.

"This principle I brought from my cradle and shall carry to my grave—sustaining it here and everywhere while life is granted me."

"Couldn't you arrange our small bill for groceries, Mr. Blower," shouted the impudent man, who proved to be the out-door partner of the firm of Firkin & Muzzy, retail grocers—"it's been running more than four years."

This was too much for the admirers of the Hon. Abimelech Blower—"Turn him out—hustle him!" shouted fifty voices all at once.

"Pass him down!"

Now when it is considered that the doomed man had established himself in the remote upper corner of the room, and that the door through which he was destined to make his exit was at the opposite extremity, it will be readily perceived how pleasant a prospect of travel Mr. Muzzy might reasonably indulge in.

An assemblage of human beings is often compared to a sea.

Boisterous and dreadful, indeed, was the ocean on which the ill-fated Muzzy was now embarking. God assail thee, poor man! if thou passest safe through yonder narrow straits, yecled the outer door.

"Pass him down!" shouted a dozen voices at the lower end of the room.

In a trice, the call was answered by the sudden elevation of Mr. Muzzy some six feet in the air. Being let down by this billow he fell into a horrible vortex of stout-handed men, who whirled him round and round, and then yielded him to the current which set toward the door. He next struck in a gulf-stream of muscular fellows, who hurried him forward at something like fifteen knots an hour. Thus he pitched from one raging wave to another, sometimes being borne toward the right wall and sometimes toward the left, as the fanciful humor of the channel varied. Sometimes he landed among a party of quiet, elderly gentlemen over their wine, where he rested a moment, as it were, between two breakers, and looking around him with pallid visage, thought the tempest was past. In a second, the gale would spring afresh, and he would be clutched up, and vexed dreadfully between two tides which both set against him with rapacious fury. At length he was caught up by a mighty billow, in the shape of two master bakers and a brewer, and dashed through the dangerous gut toward which he had been making such perilous progress. On taking an observation, he discovered that he was stranded on the curbstone, with his timbers considerably loosened and his rigging damaged. In fact, he found himself in a round jacket (instead of a long tail dress coat, in which he had entered) and frightened half out of his wits. Without stopping to fabricate any moral reflections on the event or to calculate the extent of his loss, he made a very rapid pair of legs down the street.

The Honorable Mr. Blower resumed, and continued, without further interruption, to entertain the assemblage with an able and eloquent address in which the words—my country—patriotism—our free institutions—(three cheers)—down to our posterity—received from our ancestors—(applause)—humble advocate—public career—the constitution—the glorious constitution—(six cheers)—enemies of human freedom trampled under foot—(nine cheers)—occurred at regular intervals, variegated with allusions to the personal determination of the speaker to stand by his principles, and all that. The honorable gentleman sustained an even flight of this kind for about two hours, during which the fat reporter in the small gallery took the liberty to cultivate his somnolent powers, with no despicable degree of vigor and enthusiasm.

Mr. Blower was proceeding to introduce his peroration, with nine apostrophes to liberty, and four distinct and astounding interrogatories to the crowned heads of Europe, when suddenly, and without notice, the gas-lights extinguished themselves in a body. Upon this, several clear and musical yells were raised by the hard-featured gentlemen in the gallery, and innumerable missiles began to be distributed pretty freely through the saloon. From the number that reached the Honorable Abimelech Blower, that gentleman formed a sudden conception that he was becoming the general centre of attack, and that the whole meeting had risen to a man and was bestowing its favors upon his person.

The committee having likewise arrived at a somewhat similar conclusion, they thought it came within their powers to smuggle the person of Mr. Blower through the door in the platform, and they accordingly did so, with such a degree of precipitancy as to draw the port-wine-colored coat which he had on, entirely over his majestic features. The small-voiced president they threw in to make sure that all was packed snug below. The rioters not having learned the abduction of the Honorable gentleman, continued to play their missiles toward the spot which he was supposed to be occupying, until, at length, a misdirected bottle struck the fat reporter directly upon the nape of the neck, and sent him home to write out the speech he had and had not heard—to say that, "everything went off in capital style"—that "the address of the Hon. Mr. Blower was brilliant and thrilling, and surpassed all his previous masterly efforts"—and to have a mustard plaster applied to his occiput! Champagne-bottles, wine-glasses, and broken noses, were meantime dealt about with the most astonishing prodigality, in the body of the saloon, till daylight looked in at the windows—when the survivors adjourned.

Two of the committee of reception, who had become personally responsible for the bills, on looking over the account which was handed in the next morning, and in which "to breakage"—doz. champagne-glasses; —doz. wine-bottles (best green glass); fifty window-lights;

gas-fixtures; one large chandelier (entirely destroyed) figured conspicuously—and on receiving a note from the fat reporter, stating that he should immediately commence an action of damages for the “disabling of two arteries and one spinal marrow,” unless some satisfactory arrangement was made—absconded.

When it is suggested that they left behind them two tailor's bills—a running account with a butcher and baker a-piece—and no chattels, real or personal, save two or three walking-sticks and seven small children, it will be at once conjectured how enchanting a prospect there was of these new demands being met by cash payments!

## THE DRUGGIST'S WIFE.

HARVEY LAMB was a poor druggist in the city. He was very poor—his life ebbed on in a meager channel, with a scanty tide that barely kept him from sinking. He was not born poor, nor had he become poor through thrift or improvidence, but by one mischance and another—a misfortune—a loss at sea—an unexpected turn of events, he had been gradually brought down the fair mountain-side, into the low vale of sorrowful and barren poverty where he now dwelt. Whatever of flickering splendor—of past pomp or glory of condition had been left to him after all this, sickness, like a hard creditor, had stepped in, and with her pale, slow, but inevitable hand, swept from the stage. The lights were extinguished—the curtain was torn down—the scenery (which, in truth, had been to him scarcely more than imaginary)—the fairy coloring and decoration of his boyhood, were vanished from his view. He was very poor, but not without consolation. His treasury of mere money, it is true, was exhausted—but there was one that presided over the exchequer whose resources scarce ever ran low. Fancy, a true poet's fancy, made a noble mistress of the mint. She was ever ready to meet his demands—smilingly to give him bills and drafts (such as they were) upon the future. It was sufficient luxury for Harvey Lamb to live under the bounty of this generous dispenser. Grant him but life—life in its poorest, frailest form—and the free indulgence of his fanciful humor, and he was content. In the dungeon or the prison he would have slept at ease—give but fancy, sweet, radiant creature, for his jailer! He would ask no wider limits than she could grant.

He was very poor—but he had a faithful, fond wife. Mary Lamb was all that the wife of such a man should be. She was not a copy of her husband in every quality; her faculties were not necessarily matched, head and head with his. On the contrary, Mary Lamb, was, as it were, a continuation of Harvey Lamb—

a pleasant supplement, almost equalling in value the original volume itself—in which, whatever was dark in the first, was cleared up—whatever obscure, expounded—whatever weak, strengthened and sustained. She was just what a wife should be—not a rival to her husband—for that would be harsh and unmeet—a source of jarring discords and unfriendly sounds—but a sweet possessor of other powers—some lighter, some deeper—by which the double joy—the twin being of wedded life, was made complete. Oh! what a blessing is poverty, to spirits like these! It wrought upon them its triumphant miracles. It revealed to them the great secret how all-in-all two beings may be to each other, when they become nothing to the world, and the world is nought to them; for poverty, like fame, holds a trumpet in her hand, and with it summons from the breast the noblest strength and kindest feeling of our nature. From the deep places of the heart, great emotions—heaven-like attachments, come flocking to the call of its sad music, like sea-nymphs from the vast ocean, at the sound of “Triton's wreathed horn.”

Harvey Lamb, with his wife, lived in an obscure street, in a single, small room, in the front of which he kept his little shop—a scanty assortment of drugs and vials. This was their only source of revenue. The business which was there carried on was of the most trifling sort; a fanciful old neighbor would now and then send over for a pennyworth of saffron for her canary-bird; or a dry, shrug-shouldered Frenchman, up the street, would send down for a little brimstone for his dog—or, heaviest of his professional undertakings, he would be called upon to bleed an apoplectic alderman, who lived round the corner, fronting the square. Thus year after year passed away. Harvey Lamb heard the din and tumult of the money-making world, but remained unmoved. Strange man! he saw the rich merchant crash by in his equipage, his face all wrinkled with care, and erect with importance—and yet felt no ambition to take the road for wealth, to pant upon the course for the prize of plate!

Poor fool! he sat behind his counter scribbling poetry or dreaming it.

At length Harvey Lamb was taken sick. At first it was mere weakness; but in a short time it assumed the pale-red guise of a decline. He was brought to his bed and bound there by the disease; and yet it was wonderful how fancy still held her sway—wearing her crown of flowers, and waving her ivied sceptre with the same galliard and daring air as in his hour of perfect health. His thoughts ran more sparkling than ever; his dreams were more populous with golden creatures; his visions came to him freighted more and more with the perfume of the pleasant world of faery.

“Mary,” said he, one morning to his wife, who stood by his bedside, ministering to his illness—“Mary, I shall leave you no child as a legacy by which to remember me! When I de-



part, you will be alone in the world—alone, without friend or comforter!”

“Oh! talk not so, my dear husband! talk not so; you are child and father to me now, and I trust will remain so, ever and ever while we are on earth. Tinge not your thoughts, my dear Harvey, with these sad colors of death!” She sank upon his face, and, bestowing on his lips a fervent kiss, she sat down in a chair and wept.

“This is folly, Mary,” answered her husband, “utmost folly. I fear not death, why should you? Nothing can be pleasanter and sweeter than death. To lie down in a retired, country grave-yard, in a cheerful sleep, like that which the violets enjoy before they show their glad, fragrant faces upon the earth; to listen with a calm ear—if the dead may listen—to the thousand busy sounds that nature makes along the round surface of the globe; to harken to these—the faint, gentle whisper of the spring grass, as it first shoots from the mould (noise heard only by dead and immortal beings)—the rustling of the lark’s wings as he takes his morning farewell of the earth—the snake’s gliding noise,—the crickets chirp—the fountain’s bubbling harmony—these are the entertainments provided for us in our last home! Blessed—thrice-blessed tenement!”

“Long, long may it be ere you remove from this home to that—dingy though it be!” sobbed his wife, taking him by the hand, and gazing earnestly and kindly in his face.

“Oh, Mary, fear not,” he replied, “I shall visit you again. When I have left the flesh, nothing will please me more, as a disembodied spirit, than to revisit my old haunts and my old friends. I shall come back, you may be sure, to see how you bear your widowhood. I shall look into the money-drawer, and learn if it has grown heavier or lighter since I left. You must leave the old, dark sign, with my name on the door, Mary, so that I can find the shop!”

“You are talking wildly, I fear, my dear husband!” said his wife, who, in spite of her reason, was carried along on the stream of his fast-flowing fancies.

“It will be so, it will be so,” he continued, “I shall come back to see whether you grow old and sorrowful when I am away—to learn how time passes with you. I shall visit you in spring, for that is your cheerfullest season of the year. You must be in a joyous mood, so that I can tell how near like heaven a pleasant face may make a little corner of the earth like this—look!—I shall return to find how our little neighbor improves with his violin; whether Mrs. Pegg’s canary has got well of his new, everlasting cold—and to learn whether the moss, in the caves of the house, preserves its green old youth as fresh as ever!”

Thus, the sick man kept climbing an endless Jacob’s-ladder, building pile of fancies upon pile, and descending each time, as it were, with a face glowing with the hues of one who had for a while breathed a heavenlier climate, and

enjoyed a nearer access to the mysteries of the life that is to come.

The next day after this, it was evident that the disease was beginning to triumph over his frame. He refused to allow a physician to be summoned. He wished to die in peace, with none to look upon his face but his fond wife, and no face to mar the quiet scene of departure but hers. When the discovery of the fatal character of his illness first broke upon her mind, she was overwhelmed. For a time she was stunned—and then, almost frantic with sorrow. But she was unwilling that one so near and dear to her should leave the world beholding her agony and distress. She would not disquiet his last moment (if she could) with a single uneasy or repining thought.

She restrained her grief and listened in silence, as her dying husband spoke of the parting which he felt to be near at hand.

“Mary,” said he, looking fondly, and with a melancholy smile upon his wife—“Mary, I hear the bell tolling for the departure of a poor man. For a day there will be a black thought upon the memories of a few kindly neighbors—my gravestone, as the newest in the yard, will be read for a week or so—and I shall have closed all my account with the world!”

As he spoke, a long, lean, spectral cat glided in at the door, and the sound of children at play upon the walk, came in through the opening—and the beat of a drum, rumbling in a far-off street, was faintly heard.

“I will close the door,” said Mary, rising to accomplish her purpose.

“No, no,” said he, “let me hear the sound of human voices. Let me have all the stir of life without, in its most joyous noises, as I leave; for where I go I shall find them all, only in purer and gayer shapes. Throw open the door, and the casement too, my dear, I wish to look upon the flowers in the window across the way.”

She stepped to the casement to gratify the dying man’s wish—she lifted the window half-way up—heard a faint sigh—and turning, found herself a lone widow in the desolate chamber!

That same day, toward the evening, Mrs. Lamb had been seen leaving the shop, with her bonnet and shawl. That night passed, and she returned not. A poor boy, living in the neighborhood, had closed the doors, and put up the shutters of the shop windows. The next day passed away, and the next, and no tidings were heard of the absent woman. On the third day it chanced that an uncle of Harvey Lamb had come into town from the country, and calling at his drug store was astonished to find it closed, and an air of gloom hanging about it and the whole street. When he learned that Harvey Lamb was indeed dead, he was still more astonished, no word of his illness having ever reached his ears before.

And now that the sad story was told, in all its completeness, his duty was clear. He had the body properly prepared and provided with



a coffin, and, departing, took it with him into the country to lay it in his old, ancestral graveyard, beside his mother, his sister, and his little brother, that had died many, many years ago.

On the Sunday of the next week, Mary Lamb returned, her hair dishevelled, her dress soiled, and her face haggard with fatigue, hunger, and exposure. To many questions she answered not a word; but entering the house, and finding the corpse removed, she gave one loud, piercing shriek, and with a small bundle of clothes in her hand, again departed. Choosing a street which led directly into the suburbs of the town, she hurried forward as if some matter of life and death hung upon her steps.

Crowds of people were on their way to church, and as she mingled with the stream and passed on, every eye was turned upon her in pity and wonder. Some of the more thoughtful and compassionate would have stopped her, and inquired into her trouble and suffering; but there was that of wildness and mad resolve about her look, which too plainly told that she would not be questioned, or that questioning would be fruitless.

The next morning she was seen crossing the fields beyond the skirts of the city, having passed the night God only knows where! Alas! how many poor wretches are there who appear in the morning and disappear at night-fall, whose hours of rest and slumber go by in unknown and pitiless places! How many to whom the sun seems to be their only friend, and who skulk away when he has set—care-worn, heart-broken—and hide themselves in haunts which the wild beast itself would shun!

Early spring was beginning to gladden the earth, but the poor, desolate woman walked on, taking no heed of the sweet-scented buds that smiled forth along the road, upon which she was now travelling.

She had left the beaten turnpike for a moment, and taken the high bank which skirted close to the fence, and was strolling along the foot-path when she saw two or three boys in a tree over the stone wall, fixing a bird-cage among its branches. Getting over, she came under the tree, and exclaimed, looking into the face of a smiling little boy—the youngest of the three—

"Can you tell me, child, where Harvey Lamb was buried?"

The little boy instantly came down, and going up to the questioner, took her hand and said, "No, ma'am, but grandfather is buried over in that orchard;" and the child turned and pointed to a gravestone in the far part of the orchard, a tear starting meanwhile into his sad little blue eyes.

"But Harvey Lamb's grave,—child, I must find that!"

"Grandfather's grave is the only one near here," replied the boy. "He died before mother and sister and my two aunts—so he lies all alone over in the field."

The little boy's genuine kindness had won the poor widow's heart and drawing him to her

bosom, she gave him a fond embrace, and wept warm tears to think that no such blessed pledge had been ever granted to her.

"There's a graveyard by the church, good woman," said the boy, in answer to a second question of Mary Lamb, "come, I'll show you, ma'am, it's only up the road a little ways."

Saying this, the child took her again by the hand—led her through the bars (which he let down) into the road, and up the road they journeyed about half a mile, when they turned down a lane, and in a moment more were in sight of the tombstones of a country churchyard. It stood upon a point of land around which a calm current flowed, lending to the neighboring graves a type of that rest which none but the dead can know.

The little boy threw open the graveyard gate, and exclaiming, "The sexton's in there now, digging a grave for old Billy!" scampered off back to his companions.

As Mary Lamb entered the burial-place, she heard a voice, apparently issuing directly from the bosom of the earth, singing—

"Care not I  
How deep they lie—  
Five feet or five feet ten.  
They've served their time upon the earth:  
They've had their wedding and their birth;  
Their frolic, holiday and mirth:  
They'll serve their time below.  
Care not I  
How deep they lie."

On approaching the particular spot from which it seemed to bubble up, and looking down into a pit some four feet deep, she beheld a little, bald-headed man, with his jacket off, toiling away, like a mole, in the earth.

"Can you tell me where Harvey Lamb is buried?" said the widow, asking her perpetual question.

"Not in my yard!" answered the little sexton gruffly, not deigning to look up.

"Pray, sir, can't you tell me where Harvey Lamb's grave is?" persevered the poor woman, something betraying itself in her tone which touched the little sexton's feelings.

"There's no Lambs buried in my yard," answered he; "nor there hasn't been a Lamb laid in, since old Billy Hubbard's father's grave was dug, and that was the first grave that was ever made here. And now I am making a house for old Billy No. 2—old Billy's son. They was very quarrelsome in their lives, but now they're a-going to lay next to each other, as quiet as young sparrows. Death's a mighty leveller, madam," said the little sexton sententiously, now, for the first time, looking up.

"Gracious, my dear," exclaimed the gravedigger, as his eye fell upon the trouble-worn and mournful features of the poor widow, "you look very pale. Have you lost any dear friend? Old Billy's no kin, I hope: if so, I beg your pardon." By this time he had lifted himself out of the unfinished grave. "Come along

with me, whose grave was it you wanted to find?"

"Harvey Lamb's."

"Harvey Lamb's—some old uncle or ancestor's, I suppose," continued the garrulous and really good-humored little sexton. "Come along—my wife may be can help you—she's kept a book of all the deaths and burials in these parts for twenty-years, beginning with old Daniel Hubbard (Billy's father), and running down to an unweaned babe that died this morning of a small brain fever. Come along."

Across the disordered mind of Mary Lamb a hope now gleamed, that she might be able to find the object of her painful search—the grave of her husband. She was received very kindly by the sexton's wife, who, when she learned the melancholy nature of the poor woman's visit, immediately produced a soiled old blank-book, which she handed to her visitor.

Eagerly was it seized by the anxious woman, and hastily was it examined. "There's no such name there!" said she, giving it back to the sexton's wife, with a tone and look as if her very heart was breaking. "It's not there—I must begone on my business." She would have immediately gone forth and perilled the exposures and the damp and the darkness of another night spent in the cold air, had not the good old couple entreated her, with almost tears in their eyes, to stay with them until the morning at least. She did at length—taking her evening meal with them—and enjoying a slumber (broken indeed with strange images and phantasies of the brain) under their roof—but when the morning came she was up and had stolen away before any one was stirring of the sexton's household.

Day after day did Mary Lamb ramble over the country, putting to every one her constant question. The death's bolt which had stricken down her husband, had pierced her heart beyond all remedy. From the moment when she had found herself a widow in the silent chamber, thought, reason, and restraint, seemed to have abandoned her—desolate as she was before. The husband that she loved appeared to be ever gliding before her, beckoning her forward with a shadowy hand, and with that pale, sad look which was upon him when he died—upon the pilgrimage she had begun. Onward she rambled with hasty steps—making herself familiar with the names of the dead in every village and country church-yard, and perusing the silent pages on which their departure was recorded with a mournful eagerness.

Sometimes, in the different parts of the country she had visited, a rumor prevailed that a mad woman had broken into a church and carried off the sexton's register. At others, that a wild female had been seen strolling about the fields, or sitting under the trees, earnestly perusing papers which she held in her hand, or tearing them piecemeal and scattering them along the lanes and highways.

One day she came to a quaker place of burial,

and entering it through the gate, began her customary examination of the head-stones, sitting upon the green graves and reading the inscriptions, while her face was pale and flushed by turns as hope or fear predominated.

She had at length grown weary and, for a moment pausing from her task, sat down under the fence and commenced chanting,

"In the cold earth my love lies cold:  
Oh tell me gently *where* he lies?  
Is it beneath a flowerless turf—  
Or do the blue-bells' smiling eyes  
Spread o'er his grave their cheerful dyes?  
Where buttercups in golden colors glow  
There lies my love asleep.  
Lie still, my love! and till I come,  
A calm, unbroken slumber keep!"

It chanced, while she was singing, that there was another person in the farther part of the graveyard—a venerable old quaker, who had come there to visit the grave of an only daughter, that had been buried the day before. The plaintive voice of Mary Lamb reached his ear. "Daughter, why dost thou weep?" said the old man, approaching her. "I have cause to mourn, for I have lost my only child—my dear, sweet Anna, the stay and comfort of my old age—but wherefore dost thou, so young and so lovely, weep?"

Mary lifted her eyes, and answered him with her customary old question, "Can you tell me where Harvey Lamb is buried?"

"It was of him, then, daughter, that thy verses spake! Lamb—Harvey Lamb—there are none of that name buried here; but, let me consider—there was a Lamb buried somewhere lately. Oh! it was over at Mount Pleasant! a young man, I think, brought from the city—there was a strange story told of him."

"It was my husband—my dear, dear husband!" cried the widow. "It was Harvey—he came from Mount Pleasant—strange that I never thought of it before, was it not?"

This was the first time that the idea of her husband's being buried among his fathers had crossed her bewildered mind, and she would have set out for the spot at once, had not the old quaker delayed her almost by force, and insisted upon her going home with him, and taking rest and food.

It was in the close of the afternoon, and the sky began to be overcast. In a few moments, Mary Lamb and her companion were within his dwelling, just as the first drops of the shower pattered upon the door-steps. The benevolent old quaker introduced her to his wife, and they sat down to the evening meal. The meal was finished, and Mary said that she felt wearied, and wished to lie down. The old quaker's wife thereupon conducted her up stairs, and led her into a neat, clean room, furnished with a bed, every appointment of which was as fresh as April snow. Bidding her a kind good-night, the quakeress withdrew. She had no sooner left the apartment, than Mary Lamb slipped on her bonnet—cautiously opened the door—and,

gliding gently down stairs, stole out of a side-door which led into the garden, and hastily surmounting the garden fence, found her way into the open fields.

The rain was falling in torrents—and a cold, damp, dreary night was before the wanderer. Broad flashes of lightning glared over the whole western horizon, and the thunder boomed and bellowed fearfully along the sky. Now and then a peal would begin far off, and rolling nearer and nearer with a heavy sound, as if a great chariot were driven across the heavens, burst with awful distinctness directly over the head of the lonely woman. A deluge of rain followed every discharge, and beat upon her person with pitiless strength.

Nevertheless, she steadily pursued her course. She had, at length, rambled into a portion of the country with which her childhood had been familiar. She knew every road, and turnpike, and bypath, as well as if she had travelled them but yesterday, and thus was enabled to make rapid progress on her perilous adventure. Thus for many hours she kept on, despite the rain, the lightning, and the horrid thunder. Nothing was before and around her but the darkness, and yet a great, an animating, and liberal hope lured her on. Friendless and storm-beaten, she pursued her dangerous path, without fear, without misgiving or doubt. She was not alone—though she seemed to be—for that shadowy form, which had been the guide of her pilgrimage, was with her still, and with its sweet, sad face, invited her forward and encouraged every step. God bless thee, noble woman! for there will be an end to the weary journey—strange—mournful—but lovely and touching.

Morning at last broke upon her path. The storm had passed away, and the cheerful face of nature was before her. The sky sparkled above her head with a clear brilliancy, as if it had been purified by the flood that had descended. Tree and verdure, bird and blossom, bathed in the shower, assumed a new color of vigorous and pleasant spring-time youth.

The genial rays of the sun shot through the air, and made the atmosphere soft and balmy, operating like a well-tempered bath upon the limbs, and bracing the traveller for her journey. With the new aspect of the morning, a brightness had come over the spirit of the poor widow, and she hastened on her way with a speed that seemed every moment to increase. She reached a road along which she had often trodden to school in her girlish prime of life; she saw the old school-house, and her heart beat with many fond remembrances. She came in sight of her own mother's house, where she had been wooed and won by the lover of her youth; her emotions were almost too great to bear.

She flew past it! She reached the old graveyard—hastily and tremblingly she entered its sacred domain. Her eye fell upon a newly erected gravestone bearing the name of Harvey Lamb. It was his—her own dear husband's! She fell down upon the earth and wept.

There, for a long time, she lay senseless. At length a passer-by entered the graveyard, and looking into her face—for she had raised herself, by a convulsive effort, upon her knees, and turned it toward the inscription—with her hands firmly clasped—he found that she was, in truth, dead! Her heart had broken in delirious joy at the fulfilment of her hope; and she knelt before the plain, homely gravestone, like a devotee at the shrine of his saint. With many tears for her sorrow and her beauty, they laid her beside the husband of her youth!

## THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE N. A. SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF IMPOSTURE.

THE friends of the N. A. Society for the Encouragement of Imposture mustered in strong force at the Chapel gates at ten, on a fine Monday morning, in the month of April. It was delightful to see the number of sharp, shrewd faces that pressed for the doors the moment they were opened. There was a stamp on almost every countenance that proclaimed its owner a stanch, true friend of the cause whose first anniversary was about to be celebrated within.

The chair was taken by "our esteemed and respected fellow-citizen" Mr. Solomon Chalker, whose long, saint-like visage is pretty generally familiar to the community, and, in fact, impressed upon the memories of many of them, so thoroughly blended and associated with keen bargains and certain sly tricks of trade, that it might fairly be considered a stereotype. When Mr. Chalker deposited his person in a chair upon the platform, a murmur of applause arose from the assembly. In a few brief words he expressed his thanks for the distinguished honor the board of managers of the N. A. E. I. Society had conferred upon him, in calling him to preside over their deliberations.

Still deeper was his pleasure, still higher his gratification, in occupying the chair in the presence of an audience so remarkable for their intelligence, their integrity, and their respectability, as he had no doubt was the one before him!

He should endeavor to conduct the proceedings of the day temperately, firmly, and in such a manner as he hoped would meet the approval of the audience, the members of the society, and the board of managers.

During the delivery of this address (which was received with flattering demonstrations), the chairman kept his two hands sturdily thrust into his side-pockets—apparently to be assured that his finances were in due order and safety—and a very judicious disposition of his hands it was, considering the company he was in.

He was surrounded by the board of managers themselves. At times, too, a soft sound was heard issuing from the mouth of his pocket, like the noise of metals clashing and jingling together, as if to keep the audience advised that the speaker was a respectable man, and well-to-do in the world! Mr. Chalker arose a second time and stated that the first annual report would be immediately read by the corresponding secretary, Mr. Boerum. Mr. Boerum accordingly dislodged himself from a high-backed chair, and exhibited to the meeting a short man, with a heavy, solemn countenance, and unrolling a bundle of papers, satisfactorily established, the moment he opened his lips that he had a voice, whose tones could roll like low, distant thunder—growling and muttering over the heads of the audience. The board of managers instantly cast themselves into attitudes of profound attention, both hands gripping their knees, and their ears turned obliquely toward the corresponding secretary—as if they had not heard the report read over by that identical pair of lips twelve distinct times!

### REPORT.

THE Board of Managers of the North American Society for the Encouragement of Imposture, in presenting to you this, their first Annual Report, can not but be devoutly thankful for the degree of success which has attended their labors during the past year. The board of managers at a recent meeting resolved "That the prosperity which, notwithstanding contending difficulties, has characterized the society, affords encouragement to prosecute its objects with increasing energy." Before we proceed to speak of the various efforts which have been made to promote the cause, your board can not but advert with pleasure to the spirit of harmony that has pervaded the different friends of imposture in every quarter. The conduct of the retail dry-goods dealers during the past twelve months has been highly cheering and refreshing. They have sold, as appears by statistics in the hands of your recording secretary, during that comparatively brief space of time, no less than twelve thousand common ten-dollar red shawls at twenty-five dollars a-piece, as actual merinoes! In addition to this, they have disposed of two hundred and fifty pieces of sky-blue homespun as sea-green broadcloth, by the proper arrangement of the light in the back part of their stores!

Furthermore, so thoroughly have they been animated by the great principles of this society, they have within the last three months, by unanimous consent, reduced the yard measure another inch, so that their customers are now furnished with thirty-four inches for a yard instead of thirty-five, as had been the practice for some years past! The consequences of this measure, in the opinion of your board, can not be too eagerly and enthusiastically anticipated. It is destined to create an entire revolution in the manners of the community! The male mem-

bers of it, instead of walking about our streets in those extravagant, long-tailed coats and flowing pantaloons, will now, by this dexterous change of measurement, be reduced to small-clothes! And the female portion, who have been so long habituated to fifteen yards per dress, will now be forced to exhibit their well-turned ankles and snow-white bosoms to the gaze of the world in fourteen yards and a quarter, short measure! Your board are very happy to be able to state, that this movement of the retail dry-goods dealers has been cordially met and responded to by the merchant-tailors and mantuamakers. No resistance to this wholesome innovation has been made from that quarter; on the contrary, they have given it their hearty and emphatic co-operation. The former, as soon as they learned this important movement on the part of their brethren, immediately enlarged their cabbage-holes; and the latter, the lady mantuamakers, such of them as were single, were instantly married, and made preparation for two girls a-piece, to be dressed in such fashionable silks as their customers may furnish during the next eighteen months!

The shoemakers throughout the city, and, as far as has been heard from, throughout the State, your board have been gratified to learn, adhere with praiseworthy tenacity to their old and established habit of delivering their fabrics (such as boots and shoes) precisely two weeks after the time promised! While these particular cases have afforded to your board subjects of the most lively contemplation, they have been pleased to observe that the cause of imposture is going forward with rapid strides in every part of our dearly-beloved country. Its standard is planted in every road and thoroughfare, and flies from every house-top. Its drum-beat is heard all over the land, summoning recruits, and rallying together the friends of sharp trade and large profit. Your board are deeply penetrated with heart-felt pleasure in being able to state that several interesting cases, illustrating the principles of this society, have occurred in the intercourse of the United States' government and the red men, and in which the latter have been so signally overreached and outwitted, that it is sincerely feared by your board that they will never again furnish an example of the superiority of the white man over the Indian in natural cunning and profound roguery. The board have had it under serious consideration for the past six months, to establish agencies and branches of this society among the Indian tribes for the purpose of promoting the cause of imposture, and supplying the aborigines with the elegant amusements of trade and trickery which are of so much more elevated a character than their untutored pursuits in the forest. It is the opinion of your board that the Indians would make very good milliners, deputy-sheriffs, and auctioneers. Their taste in feathers—their keenness of scent, and their exquisite voices, would amply qualify them for these employments.

From reports which have already reached

your board they have reason to believe that the great cause in which we are engaged is making rapid progress among the native tribes. "The Choctaws," writes a firm friend of the cause, in April last, "The Choctaws have established a fashionable boarding-school among them for Choctaw young gentlemen. In this school I saw five Choctaw youths engaged in learning the Greek language—and going into a consumption. The cause is prospering; all that is wanted is more brandy, more benevolence."

With these flattering prospects before them your board can not but feel renewed zeal in the great cause in which they have embarked. On every side cheering and delightful evidences of the rapid spread and success of our principles present themselves to the eyes of your board. One source of unmingled gratification your board can not with justice omit to notice—the vast increase of physicians and attorneys. From this increase they augur the most favorable results to the cause. Whatever can be done to promote its advancement by administering wrong medicines and improper advice, by purging, as it were, the system and the pocket, and by fabricating respectable and not too moderate bills of costs and charges, will, they are assured, be done by the efficient and important auxiliaries to whom they have alluded. The number of mortgages galloped into foreclosure, of consumptive patients to whom stiff cathartics have been administered and of children who have been physicked indiscriminately without reference to the disease, is truly cheering and encouraging to your board.

The efficiency and activity with which the master-builders have come up to the support of the cause also requires some notice at our hands. From an extensive and thorough inquiry set on foot by one of your board we have learned that a method of building is now in practice throughout this city by which one whole side of the house is contrived to fall down some morning about two months after its erection, leaving the family pleasantly taking their tea on the remnant of the ruins. This system furnishes a very agreeable diversity in the monotonous course of married life, and meets the cordial and sincere approbation of your board. The master-builders have humbly inquired of your board, whether the objects of the N. A. Society for the Encouragement of Imposture would be best accomplished by having the defect in the timber or the brick-work. To enlighten your board they suggested that when the timber shrinks, in nine cases out of ten, a mere collapse takes place, a wall here and there sundering and a floor giving way, but that when the brick-work is laid with sufficient haste and feebleness, there is a very good likelihood of the roof falling in, as the foundations are pretty sure of yielding. Your board, with due deference to the objects of the Society and the wishes of its members, after mature deliberation, decided in favor of the latter plan, as it furnishes the oc-

cupants of the building with a ready made coffin and saves the expenses of a funeral.

Your board regret to state that, in the midst of all this prosperity, a cloud has obtruded; two of the members of your board having been unfortunately hanged during the past year, in consequence of miscarriage in two or three innocent schemes; one, a resident member, having been detected in an arson of a building containing a deed of a valuable piece of property, given by him, but not on record. The other, who was a respected corresponding member of your board, in the great valley of the West, had the misfortune to be lynched one morning before breakfast, having been detected with a large bundle of the "Impostor's Primer" upon his person, which he was preparing to distribute. Brother Snufflight fell a martyr to the cause, with the certificates of his zeal and his character in his hands! Thus have two of our associates been snatched from our midst, in the very prime of their usefulness. Brother Snufflight was twenty-seven the very morning he was subjected to martyrdom, as appears by an entry in his journal: "Twenty-seven this day; Heaven willing, I shall consummate it by circulating the primer in large numbers—and distraining on the widow for the rent of the small brick-front in Scrabble street." Your board have now brought their first annual report to a conclusion. They think they see enough in the results of the past year to animate you to renewed effort. The work truly is great; it is a mighty and gigantic one. Contemplate it in all its length and breadth, its depth and height—its majesty and beauty. And now that we have arrived at the commencement of another official year, will we not resolve that our course shall be marked by activity—zeal—fury—madness!—yes, we repeat, madness and insanity in the great cause of imposture! "Will we not," in the words of the lamented Snufflight, "will we not live, eat, drink, sleep, with the mighty cause of imposture ever present to our minds? Will we not give ourselves up, body, soul, and spirit, nerves, marrow, and fingers, to the giant business in which we have embarked? Will we not give our right hands to the altar whose sunlight has poured its torrents upon our benighted minds—that others may also see and be blessed?" Your board can not do better than commend these remarkable words of the dying Snufflight to your understandings, and request you to contribute liberally to the cause of which he was so distinguished an ornament, as there is a deficiency in last year's account (as appears by the treasurer's report) of one thousand one hundred and eleven dollars and twenty-three cents.

In behalf of the Board of Managers,  
T. BOERUM, *Cor. Sec.*

The reading of the report was frequently interrupted by intense and enthusiastic applause, and at its close the audience gave a fresh round

more vigorous and enthusiastic than ever. The chairman now rose and stated that the treasurer's annual report would be read by Brother Pawket, treasurer of the society, and, adjusting his spectacles he looked about the platform for the countenance of that excellent and skilful financier. To his astonishment, the face of Brother Pawket did not at once present itself to his view. Several members of the board of managers now joined Mr. Chalker in the search, and the eyes of the whole audience were directed, with fearful anxiety, toward the spot from which they expected the treasurer to emerge. Brother Pawket was not in the house; a lad was instantly despatched to his residence to tell him that the audience were waiting for him and his report. In the meantime, to occupy the attention of the meeting, about fifty females in bonnets, and half as many males in red, brown, white, and auburn hair, stood up behind the president's chair and began bellowing in concert the touching and effective melody "All round my hat," or something that sounded very much like it. Just as they concluded, the boy came running back, and rushing, breathless, up to the meek Mr. Chalker, cried out, "Mrs. Pawket says as Mr. Pawket's gone to Halifax—and sends her compliments and hopes the S'ciety'll make provision for 'er, as she's left a destitute wider!" Mr. Chalker was thunderstruck at this figurative announcement of the fact that the treasurer had absconded—the board of managers turned pale with horror—and gloom pervaded the whole audience. The meek and solemn chairman, however, soon recovered the tone of his mind, and, rising again, notified the audience that Brother Bibby was present and prepared to give them an interesting account of the state of imposture in foreign lands. With this, a middle-sized gentleman, with sable hair hanging over his back, like a hank of black yarn on a spinning-wheel head, and brushed back smartly from his forehead—stepped forward and smiled agreeably to the meeting. He forthwith threw himself into the proper attitude in front of the desk. "Within the past year he (Mr. Bibby) had visited Kamschatka—the northern part of Russia—Hindustan, and several of the Pelew islands. From what he had seen, he was well satisfied the cause was triumphing in those regions of the earth. Dogs was horses, he was very happy to state, in Kamschatka still; and in Hindostan widows was firewood. As to Russia he (Mr. Bibby) thought that Siberia was a delightful place, and continued to have an uncommon number of visitors; Siberia was so solitary and retired like, that it was just the spot for philosophers and gentlemen who loved meditation and spare diet. The Pelew islands continued to maintain their well-established character for native tact and a certain adroit style of entering ship's cabins and coat-pockets, which was still epidemic in that quarter of the world. But in Siam (continued Bibby, with great enthusiasm), in Siam, it was that he had been

most profoundly astonished, gratified, and overwhelmed at the success of the great principles of imposture. He (Mr. Bibby) had seen, in that favored country, elephants which would have done honor to this society, to any society! He had seen them apply their trunks in such a manner to the pilfering and purloining of fruit and other articles, as to give him the highest delight, and which he should remember to his dying day. He (Mr. B.) thought this interesting animal might be introduced into different human employments with great advantage. They were possessed of natural powers which would fit them for many stations of trust and importance. Why (Mr. Bibby would ask), why could not several grown elephants be imported and dressed in leather hats and petershams, and substituted in the place of our city watchmen? This was an age of improvement and he thought they would be very effective. Two or three large ones, placed on wheels and intoxicated with cold water, might be carried to fires instead of the corporation engines. He would not suggest, at present, that any of them should be converted into hackney-coachmen, although he thought they had a bullying air, which would enable them to extort liberal fare from their customers, and they were also furnished with large ears to keep off the rain. He however, (Mr. B.), before he took his seat, had one favor to ask, which he trusted the board of managers would grant. He hoped he would not be trespassing upon their kindness in making this request. He was sure that in making it he was actuated by the best of feelings and the noblest of motives. (Intense anxiety now manifested itself among the audience.) He was confident that he had the good of the society at heart in so doing. While in the lower part of Siam he had seen a white elephant, with a grave face, throw his trunk gracefully over the shoulder of a missionary and pick his pocket of two bibles, three small testaments, a bundle of tracts, and a gin-flask! He wished to have that elephant elected an honorary member." (Thunders of applause, for more than ten minutes, in the midst of which Bibby sat down.)

The chairman next introduced to the notice of the meeting, Gustavus Cobb, Esq., one of those tall, slim, high-shouldered young gentlemen in whose formation the necessity of a body has been entirely overlooked, and who are, consequently, described as being—all legs. Gustavus Cobb was all legs, and looked like a lean ninepin in reduced circumstances. Judging from the slow, drawling manner in which he delivered himself, one might have sworn that Mr. Cobb had been brought up in the postoffice. "He (Gustavus Cobb, Esq.) appeared there as the representative of the postmaster-general. He was the nephew of the postmaster-general. He knew that his uncle was a friend of this society. He himself was a superintendent of mail-routes. In the performance of his duty he had often ridden with the drivers, and, from what he had observed, he was mor

ally certain that his uncle, the postmaster-general, was not hostile to the society. Attempts had been made to turn the postmaster-general from his track; they had proved fruitless. The P. M. general, firmly convinced that a certain calmness and solemnity should be observed in transporting the mails, had not allowed himself on any occasion to pass any one else on the public roads. He (the speaker) had, however, seen one alarming case where an attempt had been made to fall behind the mail-stage in coming into a post town, and which proved successful. It was a decrepid old woman, with a bag on her shoulder, travelling at a snail's pace on the Maysville turnpike.

"What are you carrying there, old lady?" shouted our driver.

"The mail!" answered the old woman.

"I carry the mail!" answered the driver, firmly, endeavoring to drop behind the old creature.

"Yes!" screeched the awful hag, "your's the regular, mine's the express!" And, do all we could, the driver was forced to get into the town some ten minutes before the old female opposition.

"From a very extensive series of experiments, the P. M. General is satisfied that spavined old horses, between fourteen and fifteen years of age, make the best kind of mails. The liberal introduction of the use of this animal has had a charming effect on the mail arrangements throughout the country. The only objection that has arisen to them is, that they are sometimes too expeditious, and evince a disposition to get through within the hour. I have heard it hinted, I will not say by my uncle exactly, that to obviate this objection, the P. M. G. contemplates introducing donkeys throughout the department—superannuated donkeys. He thinks a superannuated donkey mail (judging from the comparative success of his old horse mail) would become extremely popular.

"The deliberation, the safety and circumspection with which letters might be carried by a donkey mail, would recommend it to merchants and men of business; and the regular tardiness of its arrival and the slow moderation with which it would travel, would make a superannuated donkey mail an object of special favor among young gentlemen and young ladies, who are so fortunate as to be in love, and corresponding.

"His voice (Gustavus Cobb's voice) was decidedly and peremptorily in favor of a donkey mail! He was convinced that the whole country would rise to a man, in favor of a donkey mail, in preference to the present post office system!"

At the conclusion of the address of Mr. Cobb, a lively gentleman in a green silk vest and nankeens, was brought forward by the chairman and announced as Brother Windbolt—the distinguished professor of all the arts and sciences, and proprietor of the Universal Institute of Knowledge.

"Sir," said the accomplished Windbolt, throwing back the right breast of his coat and delicately inserting his thumb in the armhole of his green silk vest, "Sir, I challenge the world to question my attachment to the North American Society for the Encouragement of Imposture! My fidelity to its great objects has, throughout my life, been kept in view with a steadiness which would make a bet of one thousand dollars (which I hereby offer) a very unsafe one for him who should doubt my devotion to its interests. Sir, it is well known to you, and I presume to this community, with what assiduity I have labored for the last ten years, to lighten the pockets—to simplify the financial concerns of the inhabitants of this city. Heaven be thanked! the startling announcements which I have made in the public prints and by placards, of sciences to be taught by me in an incredibly brief space of time, have not been unattended with success. The incredibility of those announcements has been my salvation. The very impossibility of communicating knowledge as expeditiously as my advertisements promised, brought crowds to my door.

"Ringing the changes along the whole gamut of imposture—from the doubtful—the absurd—the improbable—up to the impossible and the hideously monstrous and incredible, I have found the number of my patrons to swell steadily at each advance! Or rather, I should say, that in running the higher keys of the scale, I found my patronage to increase at an enormously accelerated ratio!

"On looking over my accounts, sir, in July last, I discovered that my profits during the preceding nine years had been so great, as to justify my signaling the event by some public celebration. Accordingly, on the tenth of August, having provided ample and liberal accommodations, I threw open the doors of my house, and gave (I hope I am not exaggerating in saying) the celebrated Windbolt Writing Festival!" Here the speaker was interrupted by thunders of applause, which pealed from every quarter of the building, and which conclusively testified that the audience there present, considered the said W. W. Festival the most triumphant imposture of the day.

"Of that festival, sir, I feel it my duty on this occasion to render some account. We all have a common interest in it. It was given for the benefit of our common principles. On the evening of the tenth of August last, then, at half-past seven, sir, four large rooms—in the Universal Institute—two square and two oblong, were thrown open for the Festival. In one oblong room were stationed on stools at a large counting-house desk, twenty elderly gentlemen, in white inexpressibles and swallow-tails, prepared to exhibit in double entry, day-book, and ledger practice: and an equal number of young gentlemen, in blue roundabouts, actively engaged in algebra. In the square room adjoining this, five-and-twenty elderly ladies were seated at pianos, harps, and harp-



sichords. The second oblong room was occupied by the three Miss Windbolts, in cottage hats and yellow frocks, representing the three graces, with their hair in curl: with a full bevy of young ladies prepared to perform various elaborate steps and figures which had been communicated in two lessons of an hour each. But the third room, sir, held the wonder of wonders—nineteen select youth who were to play one hundred tunes, square the circle, solve the longitude, and lunch twice in the singularly brief space of twelve minutes, by the watch. I will not conceal the fact, that there was another smaller room, sir, and, in that room that Master Robert Windbolt (my youngest son) was elevated on a music stool, prepared to eat gingerbread held in his right hand and scribble away with his left at a prodigious rate for any given length of time!

"The festivities of the evening commenced. Twingle, twangle, thrum went the instruments: away flew the twelve couple of young ladies in a new highland reel—dash—like so many mad knight-errants scampered the goose-quills of the twenty elderly gentlemen over their ledgers—furiously the young gentlemen in azure jackets flourished their pencils—square the circle—lunch—solve the longitude—lunch, went the nineteen select youth to the sound of their own flutes and French bugles. Round and round, like a crazy planet, whirled Master Windbolt, despatching small text by the sheet and gingerbread by the square yard. Hilarity and animation pervaded the rooms: everybody was delighted. The great festival bid fair to go off in glorious style, when suddenly sounds of merriment, mingled with cries for mercy, reached my ear. They proceeded from one of the oblong apartments. I hastened to the spot and there, sir, I discovered a spectacle at which I was literally horrified. Solitary imprisonment is nothing, sir—is a mere luxury—compared to the awful vision—oh, that it had been a mere creation of the brain!—which met my eyes. Sir—I discovered the twenty elderly gentlemen, on their hands and knees—running the gauntlet in their white pantaloons, between the wide-spread legs of the twenty algebraic youth who were bestowing inky ferules upon their vertebral extremities. Through the dreadful strait they navigated and wriggled like so many eels with their tails cut off; with my astronomical eye I discovered dusky orbs floating through clear skies of white jean, which skirted those middle-aged flanks! Sir, there was something captivating though still dreadful, in watching those venerable serpents—those respectable milk-snakes, creeping in at one end of their fated maze, and twinkling through, with nimble expedition, mapped all over with pitch-black rivers, torrents, and ink-falls! I had scarcely recovered from the shock of this fearful spectacle, when I heard shrieks and shrill voices pitched in a high key, and a confused pother and tumult emanating from the remotest square room. Rushing breathlessly to that

quarter, I found all the two-and-twenty of the elderly ladies engaged in a promiscuous conflict with each other, aided and abetted on both sides by large numbers of the elaborate dancing misses. I was completely stunned, Mr. President, I will candidly confess, by this horrible uproar on all sides. I stood stock still between the two apartments, where I could look upon the progress of events in both, and dialogue and observations like the following, fell upon my ear.

"Go it Jehosaphat!—Jehosaphat against the course! There's a flank, there's bottom for you, my boys! from the oblong room.

"This is my third quarter, Kate Slocum, deny it if you dare! Pa paid Windbolt thirty dollars, in advance, in timber lands at Neversink!"

"My husband had some schooling, I guess, afore he was forty! I didn't teach my man his abs and babs, Mrs. Duncecombe! no I didn't—tho' some people—you know!"

"Sicore Windbolt says you thought the harpsicord was a patent oven, when you first came here; and told her what a big box of dominoes she had there, when she opened the piano!"

These elegant specimens of objurgatory eloquence issued from the square room, followed in each case by a manual attack on the fair physiognomy of the speaker, and the involuntary discharge of certain facial ducts and arteries.

"Easy, easy—striped bass! hard on, Darby—lay on the tiller Jack—so, now we're through the Narrows!" cried a nautical voice in the oblong room; and the separate directions were accompanied with sharp, clicking sounds, as of some thin, solid parallelogram of wood lighting on a certain quarter of the human body encased in tight smalls.

"Ten to one on the Leopard! Golly, Joe, he goes it like a tiger through a jungle of lightnin' rods!" shouted a second voice, which was followed by a scrambling noise like that of a body in excessively rapid motion.

In this way the confusion and clamor was every minute increased. The great Windbolt Writing Festival assumed the exhilarating aspect of being metamorphosed into a Saturnalian battle of elderlies and youngsters. It is but fair to add, that three elderly ladies, who had been taking music lessons at the Institute for thirty-nine quarters, were serenely seated in a corner of the square room during the affray, assiduously strumming on a broken harpsichord and two single-string harps, with the benevolent purpose of calming the agitation of the parties engaged. I was also highly gratified, sir, on strolling into the small room where Master Windbolt occupied a stool, to find his three sisters, the Misses Windbolts, laboriously engaged in assuaging his grief; for, as he himself informed me, his gingerbread was all out,—he'd got the cramp in his right hand, and the screw had worked through the top of the stool, and bored his hide and breeches ever so much!

After a while the tumult subsided; the young



gentlemen in azure jackets had tired of their sport; two of the elderly gentlemen in ink-striped white jean had rushed headlong out of the house ("stop that span of zebras!" I heard shouted in the street shortly after their disappearance); the old and young ladies had gradually subsided into that dead calm, into which the high winds of female passion are accustomed to fall after tempest. Thus concluded the Windbolt Writing Festival. I shall leave it with you and with this intelligent auditory, to decide my claims of fidelity and devotion to the interests of the N. A. Society for the Encouragement of Imposture, when I have stated, that of these numerous performers, the elderly gentlemen had taken four quarters' instructions, one hour and a half constituting a Windbolt quarter—in book-keeping; the select youth twelve lessons a-piece (twenty minutes making a full Windbolt lesson) in bugle-playing, lunching, &c.; the young ladies as many in the reel, fling, and gallopade; and the algebraic young gentlemen seven quarters a-piece in equations, fluxions, and trigonometrical science—all at the unprecedented rate, sir, of ten dollars the hundred lessons, and five dollars for twenty quarters—payable in advance! I close, sir, by thanking this audience for their kind attention, and defying any person present to produce man, woman, or child, that has ever profited a single quaver or fraction by attendance at the Windbolt Universal Institute of Knowledge!"

The speaker that followed Mr. Windbolt was a dark, heavy-browed, serious-looking individual who had spent the last half-dozen years of his life in the elegant amusement of passing people to their graves through an agreeable process of steam. "He (Mr. Bludgett) had certificates and affidavits by which he could show, to the entire satisfaction of the board of Managers of the N. A. Imposture Society, that he had been in the habit, for a good number of years past, of steaming to death, at the rate of one old woman and two small children every week. It might not always," remarked Mr. Bludgett, with an amiable contortion of countenance that might have been borrowed from the devil's scrap-book, "It might not always be a literal old woman and two literal small children; but then the vitality extinguished by him, each week, would amount to about that. Sometimes it would be two consumptive young men, with tolerably good constitutions: sometimes three sickly married females; and sometimes his week's work would consist in disposing of a stout, healthy-looking man laboring under the delusion that he was deadly sick. He was quite sure—he was morally certain that, with a sufficient share of public patronage, he (Bludgett) could despatch three grown men and an infant, or perhaps he might venture to say, three grown men and a tailor—per week. His baths were now in such admirable order—the steam was let off, and the fresh air let on—and the steam was let on and the fresh air let off, with such delightful precision and promptness that the busi-

ness could be done in no time! He would venture to turn any number of patients the Society for the Encouragement of Imposture might see fit to place under his charge, out of this world into the next, at the rate he had mentioned. If there should happen to be a surplus in the board of Managers itself, he would be very happy to convince any gentlemen that chose to tender themselves, of the efficacy of his system of practice!" Here Mr. Bludgett cast an awful leer upon Mr. Solomon Chalker as if nothing could be more perfectly captivating to his mind, than the idea of submitting his person to the steam process; the audience laughed; and Mr. Bludgett sat down with applause.

The chairman now arose, and thanked the audience for their attendance and attention to the exercises of the occasion, and named the day and place at which and on which the next anniversary would be celebrated.

Then followed "Anthem by the choir, and collection in aid of the funds of the Society!" and the crowded audience dispersed. It is but justice to the Society for the Encouragement of Imposture to mention that a number of tin sixpences and sanded half-dollars were found in the plate, which were supposed to have been put there by the honorary members and friends of the cause, who were distributed through the house.

## THE MERRY-MAKERS.—EX-PLOIT No. II.

CONTAINING A CRITICAL PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF MR. BOBBYLINK, AND A DELIGHTFUL AQUATIC EXCURSION WHICH THAT GENTLEMAN TOOK IN COMPANY WITH MISS HETTY STEDDLE.

NATURE furnishes, now and then, a genuine comedy as full of love, bustle, and intrigue, as one of Farquhar's or Congreve's. Seated by the side of a babbling brook that pays tribute to a delightful lake of sparkling water, with a varied woodland sloping up from its banks, on a fragrant morning in June, you may see enacted a gay drama, pregnant with lively scenes and noisy dialogue. Near by, on some neighboring rail, two amorous catbirds chatter away in animated discourse, hopping along the fence in flight and pursuit—a precious pair of ill-dressed, vagrant lovers: while, far off on the edge of the lake, so that their puny heads are just visible, bobbing up and down, two friendly little snipes are paying their respects to each other over a dead water-fly. In a thorn-bush a sweet-tempered brown thrasher hurries through his joyous and flute-like song, as if he were afraid the day would be over ere he could disburden half his music. The love-lorn king-fisher hangs on a dry bough over the stream, and brawls in his harsh, startling voice, determined to outroar the current, and keeping an eye fixed sharply

on its surface: the moment an unhappy fish becomes visible this aquatic bailiff springs upon him, fastens a talon on his shoulder, and heaving to a required quarter consoles himself for the absence of his mistress. Meantime, far up in the depths of a wood in a green glade, a tall crow, gloomy and self-absorbed, stalks about—the artful villain of the pastoral scene; and midway, in the crumbling body of a dead ash tree sits an old owl, with his broad, goggling eyes, and the dry, white moss gathered about his politic pate like a full-bottomed tie-wig, looking as wise and grave as a judge—apparently deliberating in his own fusty mind what penalties to inflict on the cheerful creatures that are flitting and chatting and making themselves happy about him. If from his position, the observer could cast a glance towards a low fence that runs along a flat meadow to his left, he might discover a sleepy night-hawk dosing on a rail, blinking out of one eye and striving, like a conceited politician, to make it appear that he sees more with his single optic than most people with two. Over this profound thinker a troop of piratical blackbirds are on the wing—hovering a little in their flight, perhaps to watch the erudite Sir Hawk knocked in the head by the first country boy that passes with a gad—with a mill-pond hard by in view, screaming and babbling and uttering all kinds of discordant noises, for all the world like a band of roving musicians twangling and sounding their way to a fashionable watering-place. To complete this little rural entertainment, in a buckwheat field beyond the lake, a single stout-hearted quail sits calling (as if giving the prompter's cue for a favorite performer to come on) loudly and enthusiastically for "Bob White!" Of course Bob White, although thus earnestly invoked, disdains to appear; but Bob Bobbylink is reclining in the midst of the many-colored scene I have described, with Mistress Hetty Steddle, the pretty serving-girl, at his side.

They were seated on the bank of an impetuous little torrent, with a light fishing-boat near at hand, fastened with a cord to the stump of a tree in a cluster of bushes, and straining on its cable, with the heady current that rushed into the lake, like a violent horse dragging at his bridle. A pair of oars were lying on the bank.

"Come now, Hetty," said the fascinating Bobbylink seizing the young lady's hand, and giving it a fervent pressure, while he arranged his face in a melancholy, half-smiling oblong, "Come now, Hetty, don't refuse,—say next Thursday and make me as happy as a robin in a cherry-tree."

"But why not wait, Robert, till your grandmother is dead?" responded the young lady with an arch look, "You know you'll have a nice little property then, and that will make us comfortable. What odds are a few days or a few weeks?"

"Good heavens! how you talk, girl!—my mother's only seventy, and her mother, cat-grandmother—lived till she was a

hundred and one, within a day. Why they're a regular brood of she Methusalahs!"

"Old women can't live for ever," retorted Hetty, "and when you heard from her the other day they thought an east wind would carry her off."

"You can't depend on that race of old ladies a minute: to day they'll be looking thin and ghastly, with a 'good-by to you all,' written as plain as large text on their features—and a whole mob of cousins and grand-nevys and nieces swarm round the old woman, peering into her face like a parcel of farmers in harvest, staring at a wet moon: every one thinking the old lady's passport for the next world is made out and filled up. The pretty nieces run over in their mind how many yards—she being a long-limbed body—it will take for her shroud, and the charming grand-nevys and cousins are busy putting out their legacies on compound interest."

"Dreadful, inhuman wretches!" interposed Mistress Steddle, with a look of horror.

"The next day," concluded Bobbylink, "she gets up from her dying bed and says, with a smile, that she can't leave this world until she has seen some of her great great grand-children (that are now infants) grown up and married: and 'gad I believe the old creature will keep her word!—so, Hetty, you *must* say next week, or postpone it till we're both gray!"

"Now, Robert," said Hetty, "I am going to ask a great favor of you. Do you think you can be liberal enough to grant it, mind—it's a very great favor, I give you warning!"

"Anything, my dear Hetty—you can have anything of mine you ask—even my life."

"No, I don't want that—I shouldn't know what to do with it—my own little wicked life is as much as I can manage."

"What is it—ask quick, and I grant at once! What's the mighty favor you desire of Bob Bobbylink?"

"To tell the perfect truth without a joke," answered Hetty smiling, "isn't this entire story about your Jersey grandmother made out of whole cloth—spun on your own wheel, with your head for the distaff and your tongue for the spindle? And didn't you contrive it from fear that young Jolton would carry off Hetty Steddle from you on the back of his property—and as you were pennyless, you matched him by throwing in a snug piece of a farm in the Jerseys?—Out with it, Robert—don't let the truth choke you, although it isn't used to trav'ling the Bobbylink turnpike."

"Hetty, you're a shrewd girl, and you've guessed right," answered Bob Bobbylink laughing. "If I have any grandmother in Jersey she ha'n't much love for her kin, for she's never notified me of her existence and I've had two grandmothers buried already. That's as many as I'm entitled to by law—specially as my parents never married but once a-piece!"

At the conclusion of this honest confession the young gentleman and young lady burst into

a hearty fit of laughter, which having lasted the proper time, Hetty Steddle exclaimed, with an air of great seriousness, "Bobbylink!—now what do you think you deserve for deceiving a poor girl in this way? Do you suppose I'll have you without your property? in this part of the country cows aren't bought for the sake of their horns, but we're willing to take the horns because we can't get the cows without 'em."

"Very well," said Mr. Bobbylink with a rueful aspect; "if you can desert me now, Hetty—there's Polly Todd will take me without a copper and bring me hard cash besides!" Robert Bobbylink, Esq., chief of the clan of merry-makers was, by reason of a tolerably good-looking person and a sprightly wit, a great favorite among the rural young ladies, and the one in question, Miss Polly Todd, had conceived a desperate attachment to our worthy. She was a professed rival of Hetty Steddle, and the mention of her name produced a fluttering sensation in the bosom of the latter.

"What if Pol. Todd can bring you a few dollars," she said, "perhaps others has got money as well as her. There's old Hetty Pease is worth twice Polly Todd and her whole generation."

"What of that?" asked Bobbylink.

"Perhaps Hetty Pease didn't die last night—and didn't leave all her earnings, by will, to her poor good-for-nothing name-sake and foster-child, Het. Steddle!"

"You don't say so, Hetty?—it can't be—it's too good to be true!" exclaimed Bob Bobbylink rapidly.

"But it is so," answered the young lady bursting into tears, throwing herself into the arms of Bobbylink, "the poor kind old woman is gone! and it's all yours, Robert—take it all and me with it!"

Robert Bobbylink was not a little affected by these marks of affectionate tenderness both towards himself and the dead, on the part of Hetty Steddle, and pressing her to his breast, and imprinting several eager kisses on her fair face, he said, "Cheer up, my dear girl—all will be right, pennyless or rich—in health or in sickness—I'll take you, Hetty—as to Mrs. Pease, you needn't grieve about that—'old women' you know, according to a high authority 'can't live for ever!'" At this unexpected quotation of her own sagacious apothegm, Hetty could not refrain from laughter, and in a few minutes her pretty countenance entirely cleared up and wreathed itself in its wonted smiles. After this they conversed a long time earnestly together. Hetty, at first, urged that respect to her deceased friend demanded the solemnization of their nuptials should be postponed at least a twelvemonth. To this Bob Bobbylink responded, that in her present situation, immediate marriage would be perfectly proper; she had come into the possession of considerable property, and could not, he insisted, with any degree of self-respect, re-

main longer at service. If she abandoned her present home, where in the wide world could she find another—now that her last relation had gone the way of death.

By arguments like these, Hetty's repugnance was finally overruled.

"Now, if you'll grant me a single favor, Robert," said she, "I'll consent that the—" here Hetty blushed like the goddess of Liberty on a village sign-board, painted by an artist, whose palette lacks all the other colors of the rainbow but red, "that the—the—it shall be next Thursday week."

"Certainly," said Bob smiling and highly delighted; "I'll grant anything Mrs. Bobbylink asks. What is it, my pretty yellow-bird?"

"Your pretty yellow-bird, Robert, how is that? I hope I haven't the jaundice this morning!" said Hetty, laughing. "But, here's the point—you must discard that clumsy fellow, Sam. Chisel!"

"What that great dunce! why it's done before it's asked; a heavy, woodcock-patched lout, that has attempted my life any time these past three years by his infernal long stories and stupid jokes. Sam. Chisel! I'll make a horse-block of him, Hetty, if you want me to, and cut his long ears into patterns for saddle-covers if you ask it."

"And Habakkuk Viol."

"Let him go, too."

"And Harvest."

"Off with his head—they're a pair of barren knaves, that for some mysterious purpose have been born with mouths, without the wit to get anything to put into 'em; and backs that would go bare, begging your pardon, as a new-laid egg, if they hadn't had a friend in Bob Bobbylink. Let them shirk from this time forth, for themselves!"

"Well," continued the inexorable and victorious Hetty Steddle, "There's Tom Snipe. He goes of course—the poor wretch that he is."

"Tommy, why Tommy's a harmless critter, and might be useful in doing chores about the house."

"Don't mention him!" exclaimed Hetty, "I can't bear the sight of him; he reminds me so much, with his warped visage, of a lean kitten in a fit. The scamp absolutely attempted to kiss me once!"

"Away with him then! away with him!" cried Bobbylink with animation.

"Discharge Smally, now, and you've done a good morning's work."

"Poor John! never—never," said Bob Bobbylink with sudden enthusiasm, "he has been always true to me, and it's but fair that I should be always true to him. You may strip every branch and limb off of the old tree—and welcome, but that leaf hangs, and all the tempests in the sky may blow, and the old tree may rock and quiver to its very roots, but I tell you that leaf shall cling to the last. John Smally—my own right hand man—it's impossible, Hetty!"

"He is always flinging his jokes at one; and he has even snickered at you, before now," continued Hetty, hoping to touch Bob's personal feeling.

"I don't care for that," he answered firmly; "he has a right—for many's the crack I've had at his expense. Come, Hetty, spare me one! You had better try to drive Burdock's brown mare in single harness, or knit stockings out of bulrushes, than get me to forego my old friend, John!"

Hetty had by this time discovered, from his tone and manner, that Bob would not relinquish this last of his merry comrades, and desisted from the attempt, for the present, but not without a further request.

"Now to finish the weeding and make a clean garden of it, there's another promise to be made: you must leave off Shekkels, the man in the mask, the bull's horns, and all your other mad capers and carryings-on. D'ye understand—if you don't I shall have you a'verted as a 'stray,' the first thing." They both laughed heartily over the pleasant reminiscences which Hetty's allusions conjured up, and Bob Bobbylink (with a liberal mental reservation in favor of stone-frolics, christmas shooting, and black-fishing) granted her reasonable request, that he should become "a good, sober man about the house."

"But stop, my dear," said he, "there's a favor you must bestow on me in return for all this."

"What's that, Robert?" said Hetty, blushing, and supposing he hinted at a kiss.

"You must let all these poor dogs come to the wedding; it will be for the last time, and it would break their hearts to shut them out!"

"Well, well," answered Hetty complacently, "I suppose it must be so—although I think it would be a slight waste of cheap crockery if all their hearts were broken in a row."

"Now," said Bobbylink, rapturous with the unexpected success of his suit, capering about the grass, and ever and anon kissing and embracing his fair mistress, "now, Hetty, I think we can take our sail down the lake with some comfort; come, jump in!"

Obedying his injunction, she sprang lightly into the boat; at this moment the cable was unloosed by an unseen hand from its fastening and Bob Bobbylink, gasping with astonishment and surprise, beheld his lady-love floating, alone, down the rapid current. Hurrying along the bank, and keeping even with the boat, he reached a rock that jutted into the water, and as the vessel glided by, he succeeded in throwing himself on board. A violent eddy seized it and hurried it out into the middle of the lake, and bore it swiftly away towards the opposite shore. In his trepidation and haste Bobbylink had forgotten the oars, and they were in a light and feeble craft without any means of directing its course, or providing against accidents that were likely to occur. To render their situation still more dismal and perplexing they heard every

now and then, a hoarse laugh sounding in the woods and echoed and re-echoed by the cliffs along the shore of the lake. A superstition prevailed in that quarter of the country, that a spectral personage whom they styled the Laughing Devil, roamed constantly about these woods, and gave token, by a harsh startling laugh or chuckle, of danger impending over the neighboring inhabitants. Plough-boys on their way home through the woods, after nightfall, pretended to have seen a short, burly creature, with a grisly beard and stiff shock of jet-black hair, standing in the shadow of a stunted ash-tree, or dwarf-oak, holding both his sides, with his face distorted by laughter which he seemed to suppress by main force; and which, when they reached the edge of the forest, would burst from him with great violence and startle them like a near peal of thunder.

An idle fellow, who spent much of his time in wandering about the swamps and low-grounds of this region with his gun, asserted that more than once, when he had raised his fowling-piece to his shoulder and was on the point of levelling it at a wild-pigeon or a gray-squirrel, he had been horribly alarmed by seeing the bird or animal suddenly moult its feathers or hide, which fell to the ground like the cast-off slough of a copperhead, and, in the twinkling of an eye, become transformed into a robust goblin, who leered upon him from amid the leaves with a countenance distended with laughter, while tears of mirth flowed copiously down his wrinkled cheeks. His gun, this vagabond sportsman added, would inevitably be out of order in a day or two after the vision, and miss fire a dozen times or more in succession, if the powder was in the least damp! However this might be, it was a well-known fact, that just after a thunder-storm this mysterious sound was sure to be heard loudest, and they often found immense trees riven to the very roots, and lying maimed and prostrate upon the earth, in the quarter of the woodland whence it had issued. If the grain was blighted, or a foal cast before its time, or a sheep missing, that long, fiendish peal of laughter was heard echoing and ringing through the woods, and the birds took to flight as if from some dreadful object of terror and alarm.

The sounds which reached the ears of Bob Bobbylink and his companion at the present time seemed, therefore, peculiarly awful and ominous. To increase their anxiety, they thought they saw faces, ever and anon, thrust from among the bushes and grape-vines which overhung the banks, grinning and moping with aspects more like those of malicious spirits than of men. This might have been phantasy, but they swept straight onward, and were in the utmost peril of being dashed headlong against a rock that projected into the lake, when suddenly a boat shot from within its shadow, and, making for that in which Bobbylink was seated and running close by their side, one of the persons that occupied it gave Bobbylink's boat a forcible

turn by the bows, and pushed her out into mid-channel. Bobbylink now observed that the strange boat was held by four men. On closer inspection he discovered that they were persons with whom he was acquainted, and with regard to whom he had been making sundry very liberal promises during the morning, to Miss Hetty Steddle.

The boat of the four new-comers now began to play about Bobbylink's; and its occupants threw out, as they flashed athwart her bows or alongside, observations like the following—much in the same way as a frigate skirmishes about a crippled seventy-four, firing a broadside at each evolution—reloading, and coming up on the other quarter with a fresh discharge. "Ha! ha!" cried one of them, exhibiting a broad countenance, distorted with laughter, "that stupid dunce, Sam. Chisel, sends his compliments to you, Mr. Bobbylink, and hopes it's a fine morning for sailing. He presents you a brace of heavy woodcocks," giving Bobbylink a blow on either side of the head with his open hand as they crossed the stern, "and sends you a tumbler of the fresh fluid to wash 'em down!" He followed his last observation with the discharge of a boat-horn full of water from the lake; each one of the four being supplied with a short weapon of that kind, which, as every one knows, consists of the horn of an ox attached to the extremity of a wooden handle, and is used in sloops and other river-craft, to wet the sails.

"Any word to send to your friend 'Bak Viol?" said another of them, "he's in a famishing and dreadful state, having a mouth, without the wit to get anything to put in it. Do send him a drop of water and a kind word, if no more." And this gentleman playfully repeated the baptismal ceremony performed by his friend Chisel.

"Take that," exclaimed a third, a little man with a dry visage, punching Bobbylink with the butt-end of his boat-horn in the back and ribs, "take that from that harmless critter, Tommy Snipe! and this, mistress," dashing a hornful of water into the face of Miss Steddle, "there's something to cool your kitten with, when she's in a fit! ha! ha!"

"As for Harvest, let him shirk for himself," said a fourth, "he's a poor, barebacked animal, and is of no more value than an old rain-spout," accompanying his words with a copious commentary of an aquatic nature.

Wheeling the boat about, and discharging small-shot like this, they at length seemed to have wrought the sport to a climax, and at a signal given by Habakkuk Viol, they prepared for its consummation by each filling his boat-horn to the brim.

"There, Bobby," cried Habakkuk, discharging his piece, "put that in your pocket, and keep it to sprinkle your firstborn with!"

"Young lady," shouted Sam. Chisel, "them nice, buddin' roses on your cheeks, wants wa-

terin' a little," and he supplied the deficiency forthwith.

"Linkem!" exclaimed Harvest, "I don't believe your coat's ever been sponged, that," throwing the contents of a boat-horn on the collar and skirts of his upper-garment, "that does the business for you!—and there's a little of the rock-crystal to drink your tailor's health in!"

"Miss, how's them colors on your gown—will they stand the water?" said Tommy Snipe, instantaneously applying the test to which he alluded.

"May-be your pockets is dry," suggested Sam. Chisel, insinuating a couple of hornfuls adroitly into that quarter of Mr. Bobbylink's dress, "they're gapin' like oysters for a drop o' drink."

"What a nice water-proof Robert's got on, this morning!" exclaimed Viol, testing the latter's assertion recorded in the lining, by a small artificial shower. "Warranted against thunder, lightning, and rain!"

"Why, Bob, you look like a pond-duck in the equinoctial!" said Sam. Chisel, "is that your mate, Bobby?—if so it be, her feathers want purifying!"

"Judging by the crook of his nose," continued Hank Harvest, "he looks more like a fish-hawk," and again emptying his boat-horn, "he should get used to his adopted element."

Now, with a grand and general discharge of their pieces, as they discovered that they were nearing the opposite shore, and the idea flashed across their minds that if Bobbylink and his companion were once landed, they might annoy them pretty seriously from the banks, they altered their boat's course, and, shooting athwart his bows, plied their oars for the other end of the lake.

"There, Mr. Bobbylink," exclaimed Viol, as they parted company, tossing him a farewell beaker of the fluid, "I advise you to save that to wash your face with the first time it's clawed by Mrs. Hetty Bobbylink."

"And don't forget to make me a pair of saddle-covers out of Sam. Chisel's ears—when you catch him!" shouted the proprietor of said ears, grinning monstrously, and playfully projecting a jet of water into the mouth of Bob Bobbylink, which stood agape with astonishment and terror.

During all these manœuvres, which had been executed within a brief space of time and with admirable dexterity, Bobbylink had retained his seat, half inclined to kindle into a horrid passion, and half determined to burst into a hearty laugh, and take it all as a good joke. To be sure, when he looked upon his fair mistress, and saw her new figured-silk dress drenched with water, he was sorely vexed and discomforted; but he had brought, he well knew, the whole catastrophe upon them by his hasty promise to discard his old friends and cast them loose, in the very first hour of his prosperity and success.

He therefore felt bound, in conscience and

honor, to bear it cheerfully, and accordingly he had no sooner handed Hetty from the boat than his lungs exploded in a genuine and honest cackination, in which he was instantly joined by Miss Steddle, that young lady enjoying a very pretty sense of the ludicrous, and feeling, with her worthy associate, that she deserved it all.

Pleasantly laughing over the whole scene, they seated themselves on a wall in the sun, and speedily drying their garments, started off to gather blackberries instead of tempting, a second time, the unlucky element.

## DISASTERS OF OLD DRUDGE.

CONTAINING THE UNLAWFUL IMPRISONMENT OF AN OLD GENTLEMAN; A POPULAR BATTLE BETWEEN TWO ATTORNEYS, AND A FEW PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE IMPROPRIETY OF OLD GENTLEMEN BEING OUT AFTER DARK.

The village of Plumpitts stands at the head of a vile little creek, which runs in and out from the Sound with the tide. Unfortunately, the tide has a propensity to be out oftener than in, so that Plumpitts, for the better part of the day, sits like a great duck stranded in the middle of the mud. The inhabitants of Plumpitts are of two classes; those who belong to the river interest, and those who belong to the inland interest. The former, consisting of two rival sloop captains, half a score of vagabond boys and idle-looking men, who assist the said captains in navigating their craft to the city; and the inland interest, consisting of half-a-dozen shopkeepers, and as many pestilent old women, the former of whom spend their time in re-tailing sugar and starch to customers from the interior, and the latter in wholesaling scandal and small-talk to each other—and a very thriving trade they make of it. The standing population of the village is composed of about twenty blue-nosed toppers, who hover about a place called the Point, like so many noisy gulls, during the early part of the morning and toward night, and pass the rest of the day in dirty fishing boats along the shore of the Sound, solemnly engaged in capturing black-fish and bass for their present wants, and providing a stock of cramps and rheumatisms for their old age.

About three miles back of Plumpitts, there lay, once upon a time, an ill-conditioned piece of land and a dilapidated old house, which, altogether, was entitled the homestead; and in a small room in the old house, a sharp-faced, gray-eyed little woman, and a red-visaged man, some two sizes larger, were seated at a breakfast-table. The little woman sat erect and was engaged with toast and coffee, and the man was bent nearly double over a bowl of sour buttermilk, and a white, earthen plate, holding a single small perch or sunfish, burnt to a crisp.

"Drudge!" cried the little woman, sharply. "Ma'am," answered the red-visaged man, timidly.

"You know I own this farm?"

"Yes."

"And this house?"

"Yes—and the span of horses and the family carriage!"

"Very well—and all the ready money—do you know that?"

"Oh, yes," responded Mr Drudge, in a faint voice.

"And that you brought nothing but an old saddle when I married you?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"How dare you, then, eat fish and butter-milk together, contrary to my express orders? Yes—how dare you—you miserable pauper!" shouted Mrs. Drudge, working herself into a sublime phrensy.

"Dear Tishy, I thought there was no harm in it!"

"Don't Tishy me—don't dear me—you object."

"You know I caught the perch myself," humbly suggested her red-visaged victim.

"I know you did—you poor creature—when you ought to have been at home minding your business. You hav'n't split your day's oven-wood yet, nor milked, nor brought water, nor churned—you've done nothing this morning, Drudge, worse than nothing—oh, you poor, lazy thing!" and she gave the poor man a glance, which, if it had been half a degree fiercer, must have inevitably scorched him to a cinder. At this moment, a heavy-headed country boy thrust his face in at the door, horribly distorted with terror and bad news, and cried out, "Buzbee's red bull, missis, has just busted into the corn, and our sheep has just busted out of the long-lot into Buzbee's woods—and the devil's to pay all over the farm!"

"There's more work for you, Drudge!"

"Oh yes!" rejoined that gentleman, adopting his customary reply when he had nothing better to say.

"Why didn't you look after that fence? I told you Buzbee's bull would be over before a week's time. And why hav'n't you penned the sheep, as I ordered you a month ago?"

The heavy-headed boy here returned and interposed.

"I forgot to say, missis, that the storm last night 'as washed away the little barn—and missis' carriage is buried in Blind brook, half full of mud, and two thirds o' water."

"My God!" cried Mrs. Drudge, in a sudden paroxysm of anxiety, "I thought it would be so, Drudge, I thought it would be just so. You wouldn't move that barn further up on the bank—no, you wouldn't—though you might have done it, if you'd strained yourself a little, with Moe's help. Good heavens! I'm afraid the carriage is ruined, and I wanted to use it this very day—good Lord!"

"I think it might be got out, missis," con-



tinued the heavy-headed youth, if Mr. Drudge would be so good as to give me a lift." The heavy-headed youth smiled profoundly, as if he thought it would be a very brilliant stretch of fancy to suppose for a moment that Mr. Drudge could escape the necessity of furnishing his assistance, manual and bodily.

"Drudge, do you hear!" cried his sweet-tempered spouse, "go along with Moses, and help him get the carriage out, this instant!"

Moses had left the room. "Moses!" shouted Mrs. Drudge, "Moses!"

"Here, ma'am, here I be," responded the youth, pushing a segment of his broad face over a corner of the lintel.

"You may help Drudge a little while, Moses, only five minutes, be back here by that time. I want you to cut some 'sparagus to put in the front parlor, and a nosegay for the fireplace—I expect aunt and sister to tea, Moses," she concluded, bestowing a bland smile upon the heavy-headed juvenile.

Moses and Mr. Drudge thereupon departed, the latter muttering, as he turned a corner of the house, a fervent prayer for the immediate demise and interment of the amiable lady whom he had just left. As they crossed the fields on their way to the scene of labor, Drudge was the first to open a conversation with his companion.

"Underhill," said he, "have you got the money by you for those muskrat skins?"

"No, I hav'n't just now," replied the boy, "Fields told me if I'd come over to the tanyard to-morrow he'd settle with me."

"And what have you done with the bag of fresh feathers?"

"Them—why, put them aboard the market-wagon. I expect you'll have returns by next Tuesday, or the day arter," responded the youth, with a very intricate and complicated expression of countenance, which might have been construed to mean half-a-dozen things at once.

"I want that money very much," said Drudge, partly to himself and partly to his companion. "There's Quimby's bill, on the P'int, and John Merritt's account for clothing, ought to be paid the first time I go to Plumpitts."

"I think they ought, by all means," echoed master Moses Underhill, with the same ambidexter look.

They had now reached Blind brook, and discovered the family carriage up to its waist in the middle of the channel, the water dashing over its dark top like that of some huge, black monster which was struggling for its life up the stream.

"Moses," said Drudge, after surveying it for a moment, "you'll have to strip and go in."

"Catch me!" exclaimed master Moses, retreating backward up the bank, "if you say two words about that again, Drudge, I'll go home and tell missis, and then you'll catch it I reckon!"

Mr. Underhill accompanied this tender threat with a complacent grin, which had the singular

effect of throwing old Drudge into a violent fever, which lasted some three minutes and a quarter.

"Well, Moses," said he at last, finding the youth intractable, "I suppose I must do it myself, or else (lowering his voice) there'll be the devil out of the pit to pay up at the house!"

Directing his companion to bring a coil of rope and a couple of lengths of rail, old Drudge stripped stark naked and plunged in.

The first discovery he made was, that Blind brook was some two feet deeper than he had imagined, and, consequently, over his head. His first movement after making this pleasant discovery was to grasp the limb of a tree which overhung the stream. This he succeeded in doing, and sustained himself by it some five minutes, bawling all the time to Moe Underhill for help; and when, at length, that charming youth came forward to his assistance, his zeal and eagerness to rescue Mr. Drudge were so overpowering that he rushed headlong against the tree from which that gentleman was suspended, with such precipitancy as to shake Mr. Drudge directly into the water as if he had been a shrunken russet-in-apple, in want of nothing but moisture. At the very moment when he fell, a heavy swell of the freshet came tumbling and raging down the brook, and, striking Mr. Drudge obliquely over the shoulder, carried him under; he rose for a minute to the surface, and threw out his hands convulsively toward the outstretched limb, Mr. Moses Underhill ran up and down the bank, shouting to him to "dive for the coach!"—when a second billow, heavier than the first, rushed upon him and bore him from the sight. The injunction of Moe Underhill (in whatever spirit it was given) was not lost upon the submerged Drudge, for, aiming with considerable skill, he succeeded in permitting himself to be borne in at the carriage-door, which was swung open by the tide. Shortly after, a long, melancholy-looking head was put out at the top of the coach-door, and Moses discovered that old Drudge stood upon the back seat of the family carriage, and was safe.

After waiting something like an hour, until the swollen torrent had subsided, Old Drudge and his companion renewed their attempt, and, with many struggles, by the aid of rope and crowbar and bar-post, they succeeded in rolling the carriage upon the bank—the greater share of the labor falling, of course (out of deference to his years), upon the patient Mr. Drudge.

In the course of a couple of hours more, the carriage was cleaned and partially dried, and stood before the door awaiting Mrs. Drudge's orders. The horses that were harnessed to it were a notable couple, being sorrel twins, having long, ghastly necks, short tails, and punchy bodies, with small mouths and mournful eyes; and, to complete their character, lean and feeble, with a look of over-work and ill-usage.

"Drudge!" screamed the amiable female bearing that name, standing in the door and di-

recting a withering glance towards Mr. Drudge, who was slowly shambling up the lane completely exhausted and toil-worn. "Drudge,—I want you to get in the carriage and go down to Plumpitts at once!"

"Oh yes!" said the poor man, meaning "oh no," a thousand times repeated with an emphasis.

"Get in immediately, and I'll tell you what I want." Drudge mounted in, almost mechanically, under the talismanic influence of that inexorable voice. "And now turn the key, Moses: there—sit still now, Drudge, and mind me?"

These words had been accompanied by the closing of the carriage-door, the insertion of an iron key in a lock attached to the same (which Mrs. Drudge had placed there, knowing old Drudge's propensity to indulge in potations and forget his errands when he visited the thirsty and drinking village of Plumpitts) and Mr. Drudge's assuming a quiet, martyr-like demeanor, as if he had been put in jail and expected every minute to be brought out to instant execution.

"In the first place, Drudge, you'll get me a pound of Mr. Slimfink's best tea—best young hyson: try it yourself, Drudge, you're a good judge of tea, Joel, though you don't get it but once a week!"

"Oh yes!" murmured Drudge, softly.

"You needn't get out there; Slimfink will bring a sample to the door, I gave him directions when I was there last about that. Next, Drudge, you'll go over to Wringold's shop, and purchase two yards of his small spotted calico—just in. Mind Drudge—small spotted red calico—spots very small.

"Can't he get me a new jacket, m'issis, while he's there?" suggested Moe Underhill from the box seat, smiling pleasantly on his mistress.

"You deserve a jacket—don't you—you villain, for minding me so well this morning, and coming back in just five minutes. You good-for-nothing, you ought to have the jacket you've got on well-trimmed, instead of a new one.—And Drudge, you can stop at Slimfink's as you come back, and buy me seven pounds of Havana sugar, and a quarter of starch; and, mark me (raising her fist clenched in warlike fashion), don't you venture to leave the carriage till you've made every one of the purchases! Purchase by the sample, Drudge, and let 'em understand you pay in silver!"

The sorrel twins, now, after repeated admonitions from a whip in the hand of Mr. Moses Underhill, succeeded in getting themselves in motion. The carriage wheels had scarcely revolved more than twice or three times, before the voice of Mrs. Drudge was heard, calling after them, and the person of Mrs. Drudge was seen in pursuit of the vehicle. Moe Underhill, allowed her to enjoy a delightful little trot on the highway before he condescended to arrest his promising span.

"Stop, Moses, stop, stop, stop!" cried Mrs.

Drudge, in an ascending musical voice. "Here's the key: you've forgotten the coach-door key!"

At length she overtook the fugitive vehicle, and handed the key up to the youthful worthy on the driver's seat, "Do you hurry back, Moses, to cut that asparagus and make that nosegay."

"Yes, misses, I'll make you a very nice nosegay when I come back—a very nice one," answered Mr. Underhill. Whether he ever lived to come back and make that nosegay is a matter about which the reader's mind will be placed perfectly at rest at the sequel.

"Drudge!" cried his amiable spouse once more, conveying her little sharp face and vicious gray eyes inside of the carriage window. "You may bring me a bunch of black-fish, if Tom Haddock has any fresh from the water: and don't you get out till you've brought the fish as you value your life;—and as for the starch—recollect—it's for my own personal collars, and not for yours—so you'll get first quality."

Hereupon Mrs. Drudge departed, Mr. Drudge fell back in his seat from the awful state of suspense in which he had listened to the last injunction of his charming lady, and the carriage trundled or crawled along the road.

They travelled on quietly at a moderate pace for the first mile and a half of the distance to Plumpitts, when suddenly, as they were turning a corner of the road and driving close by the side of a stone-wall, Moe Underhill was shot softly from the carriage-box over the fence and landed on his feet, in the neighboring field. Old Drudge was slumbering at the moment, but waking up a little while after and looking out at the window, he discovered a heavy-headed apparition bearing a marvellous general resemblance in outline and movement to Mr. Moses Underhill, scudding rapidly across the fields. It was, however, only the thought of a moment with Drudge—and as the sorrel twins made no such discovery, they journeyed forward at their old pace the same as if nothing had happened. At length, they reached the brow of Plumpitts' hill, and feeling no restraining hand at the rein they scampered down the declivity in lively style, like a span of runaway spectres; and rushed into the village with the old family carriage clattering at their back, at such speed as to bring the best part of the population into the road, and the remainder to their doors and windows.

The horses being without guidance aimed for a public horse-trough, in the centre of the village, at which they had a chance of obtaining a few stray oat-grains, left there by more fortunate and better-fed quadrupeds that came to water.

The eyes of every adult inhabitant of Plumpitts were levelled forthwith at the family carriage of Mrs. Drudge, which was well known in the village; and on the discovery of Mr. Drudge in one corner of the same, conversation like the following arose:

"Ah! ha!—there's Tishy's private prison again, and her poor-travelling jail-bird!" said



an idle tailor, who had abandoned his shop-board and gathered with a group of men and women in front of the post-office.

"How old Drudge is beginning to look!" rejoined the post-master's wife, with her hands under her apron. "Upon my word he looks ten years older than uncle Si Purdy—and he's sixty last Christmas, ten o'clock at night!"

"Enough to make a man look old, madam," said the tailor, who was a consequential little personage with a figurative turn of mind and a firm expression of mouth, "to be riding about like a lobster in a stew-pan with the lid on, in that horrid box of Tishy Drudge's. If I was Joel Drudge I'd kill her—yes! I'd maul her to death: I'd hold her up to the sun on a three-pronged pitchfork, and toast her to a cinder and go into a regular state-prison at once as an incendiary! I'd commit some dreadful crime—that would I—rather than be confined in that close crib. It breaks a man's spirits like pie-crust, such a thing does! He can't work—he can't do anything—he can't pay his debts! it incapaci'tates him!"

The name of this tailor happened to be John Merritt, and the reader will at a thought, discover the happy pertinency and deep feeling with which these remarks must have been delivered.

"Why," said Tom Haddock, the fisherman, who had paused with his wagon in front of the post-office, to join in the conversation, "he's just as silly in there—Old Drudge is—as a consumptive mackerel, in my big fish-car. But where, in the name of the great Striped Bass that Bill Horley caught last week, where is Moe Und'rill? I saw the carriage come rattlin' in, without pilot or helmsman, or a man at the sculls, as I was crossin' the P'int. 'There must be something the matter,' says I to Harry Shaddle, 'or, you may depend on it, the boy would have hold of the tiller!'"

"You say truly, Thomas," said the tailor, "something must be the matter, or Moses Underhill *would* be in his place on the carriage seat. Joel Drudge couldn't have driven the horses down, sitting inside the vehicle, unless his neck was as long as a crane's and he had arms to match! Underhill is a wild youth and may have pitched himself headlong from the seat out of despair!"

"What the devil would he do that for?" asked Tom Haddock.

"Because his master can't pay his honest debts?" answered Mr. Merritt.

"That's more than likely," said a small, thin-shouldered old man, with a pair of smart, sparkling eyes that constantly gave the lie to the rest of his countenance, which was dull, heavy and devoid of meaning. "That's more than likely, for didn't Dolly Hiedlebrook's cat hang herself in a boot-jack, because her mistress got too poor to keep a cow?"

"Cats love cream, and Moses Underhill loves money, and I shouldn't be surprised if he had

got off and drowned himself out of mere respectability," added Mr. Merritt. "It isn't respectable for a man to owe a tailor's bill."

"It isn't, Mr. Merritt—by no means it isn't, and Tishy Drudge ought to be ashamed of herself for not keeping her husband in good clothes and them paid for—her owing as she does—the Hum'stead—and ready moneys out at interest too!" asserted the postmaster's lady, with an air of virtuous indignation.

"He shall pay mine, I know!" cried the little tailor, in as towering a passion as a little tailor can be supposed, by the liveliest stretch of imagination, capable of elevating himself to. "If it costs me all the thread and thimbles in my shop—and a year's beeswax too—I'll bring him up to the mark. John Merritt won't be trifled with any longer."

"You're right, Merritt," said the thin-shouldered man. "I wouldn't submit to it!"

"Merritt! Merritt! who are you talking to?" asked the little tailor, ferociously, looking down from the eminence to which the tempest of passion had whirled him. "My name is Mr. Merritt—Mr. John Merritt!"

While this dialogue was passing, a new personage was approaching the grand centre of attraction—Mrs. Drudge's family carriage. This was a broad-built, heavy gentlemen on horseback, with a marvellously well-developed person, presenting about the same breadth of surface to the eye, from whatever point he might be viewed: whether from the north, the south, the east, or the west. In a word it was Harry Shaddle, the fat landlord of the tavern on the Point. He rode up to the window of the carriage and looking in, exclaimed, "What, Joel, in the old squirrel cage again!—Why ar'n't you out, and trotting down to the P'int to take a cup with us? eh! solitary confinement's dry work as the gad-fly thought when he was corked in an ounce vial!" With this the portly landlord gave a hearty laugh, which shook not only his own wide domain of flesh but even reached the nag upon which he was riding, and nearly shook the little animal off his legs. This self-same laugh had made his fortune. "Where's Moe?"

"Where is the boy?" cried Drudge, after thrusting his head out of the carriage, and now, for the first time, investigating the driver's seat.

"I heard that you come in without a driver, Joel, or else the Old One was setting up there unsight, unseen—for your horses did come down the hill, as if they had the very devil at their heels!"

"I'm afraid the boy's thrown off and killed—my God! what will Tishy say?" exclaimed Drudge, elevating his hands and eyebrows and speaking from the very bottom of his ventricle. "I thought I saw him pitched from the seat, but it's like a dream."

"Oh, don't disturb yourself, my old boy, I don't believe Moe's dead—or like to be: he knows too much for that. But have you heard the news, Joel?"

"No—what news? nothing dreadful I hope."

"Nothing very dreadful: only Quimby's broke and blown up on the P'int, as I prophesied. I knew he couldn't last long again' the Old Stand with Harry Shaddle behind the counter—though a few of his friends flew off to the new perch—and you among the rest, Joel, I'm sorry to say!—Quimby's blown up like a smack with a pound of gunpowder in the hold, and a dropsical vagabond on deck: a limb of the poor devil is scattered here and a limb there. Here his rotten liver and lights; there, a decayed leg—and for his brains—the harbor-master may find them if he can and lay a duty on 'em!"

"He has made a sad time of it!"

"Yes; he's exploded entire, and made an assignment out and out; whereby he assigns and sets over to Smith Plevin—assignee, attorney and creditor in chief—five live toppers, a row of broken-necked brandy bottles, an uncollected account against Joel Drudge, Esq., a pair of musty boots, two odd slippers, a tap-room without a customer, and a fishing boat without a bottom!"

"Smith Plevin's the assignee, is he?" asked Drudge, with a pretty thorough knowledge of the character of that same Smith Plevin.

"Yes, Smith is the assignee—and devilish tight work he'll make of some of you!—You'd better fight shy of Plumpitts, for he'll be sure to snap you up the first time he catches you in the county!"

With this friendly caution Harry Shaddle touched his whip to his horse—and rode off, sitting erect in his stirrups, and trying to make a spectacle of himself, as every fat man does, and—to the credit of their efforts be it spoken—they generally succeed! Old Drudge threw himself back in the carriage, and began to cogitate with all his power of mind (which was by no means unlimited) over Quimby's unsettled bill—and the fate of Moses Underhill—striving to devise some plan to pay the one and imagine what had become of the other, when he suddenly descried a man and a boy approaching by one of the cross roads that led into the village, and, at the same moment, two other men advancing on the other side, from the opposite extremity of the same road.

He soon discovered that the former were Mr. Smith Plevin, the attorney, and Moe Underhill; and the latter, John Merritt, in company with a man, whose person was unknown to Drudge. Smith Plevin, was a middle-sized man, with a hard livid countenance, without a drop of blood, and a low, bony forehead, made to look still more villainous by having his stiff black hair combed down over it.

"You are my prisoner!" said this personage, stepping up to the carriage with a heavy bundle of papers in his left hand, thrusting his right hand in at the coach window and grasping old Drudge rudely by the collar.

"You lie, sir, he's mine!" shouted a voice from the opposite side of the vehicle, and another

hand was placed at the same instant upon the collar of Drudge's coat.

"Haul him out, law or no law!" cried a second voice from the same quarter. "Drag him out, Mr. Skinnings—drag him out—like a weasel from an egg-basket!—he has owed my bill long enough, and I will have satisfaction, cost what it may."

At this peremptory direction, which proceeded from Merritt the tailor, his companion gave Drudge a violent jerk, and attempted to pull his person through the window of the vehicle.

"Hold there, Skinnings, or you'll get in trouble!" bawled Smith Plevin. "You've been breaking the man's close—*frangit clausum*. Stir an inch further and I'll bring an action for him myself! He's our prisoner!" and Mr. Smith Plevin twitched the body of old Drudge with great energy towards himself. "You're a malefactor, a plagiendo, and d—d fool, Smith Plevin!" shouted Skinnings, "and you may take that as your counsel-fee in this case!" and he passed a pound weight of hard knuckles to the account of the small ribs of Attorney Plevin.

"See that, Moses!" cried Plevin, with quivering lip and knees that quaked with apprehension. "An assault, with intent to kill! mark that, Underhill! you're good evidence—over fourteen, I believe, Moses?—understand the nature of an oath?"

"Yes, sir!" answered master Moses, readily, "yes, sir!"

"All right," said the attorney, withdrawing his hold from Drudge's collar, "that's the second case I've picked up to-day: now get your prisoner out, if you can, Skinnings!"

In accordance with Plevin's ironical advice, Skinnings first tried the carriage door; finding that impregnable, he next attempted to draw Drudge's body out at the carriage window, but, after several strenuous trials, he discovered that it was impossible to get more than the head of the terrified debtor through, and, as his writ required and authorized him to take "his body," he was obliged to abandon the attempt. Meantime, Smith Plevin stood by, indulging a sarcastic laugh, punching Moe Underhill with the end of his law-papers, and inviting him to observe the "smart practice of Sim Skinnings, the best lawyer in the county!" When Skinnings withdrew from the carriage, muttering "it wouldn't be safe to break the cursed old door!—let's see what this bright young attorney has got to do." Plevin stepped forward with a complacent snirk on his countenance, and placing his hand upon the coach-door, turned toward Moe Underhill, and, smiling, said, "Moe, advance with your iron argument, in other words, bring the key. I think we'll introduce a document here that will effectually remove this stupid plea in bar."

At this summons, Mr. Moe Underhill inserted his right hand in his right breeches-pocket; and it is singular what a wonderful effect that simple insertion produced on the whole expression

of the boy's broad face; his lower-jaw fell, his cheeks were monstrosly elongated, and he, all at once, looked strikingly like a Shaker in a brown study.

His hands immediately and swiftly penetrated into every conceivable pocket about his person; he cross-questioned every nook and corner of his clothing, and subjected his hat and boots to a series of most searching interrogatories.

The universal and stunning return from every quarter was an unmitigated *non inventus*, so that Master Moses Underhill had enjoyed a beautiful travel on foot, of some half-dozen miles in the bracing country-air, over to ———, the capital of the county, and notified Smith Plevin that "Now old Drudge was to be caught out of his own county"—all to no purpose. The horrid reflection crossed his mind, that he might have lost the key in jumping from the carriage, or in his scamper over the fields.

That this enterprising young gentleman might not be alone in his peculiar style of face, Mr. Plevin obligingly drew out his countenance to the requisite length, and stood opposite Moe Underhill with a responsive extent and sadness of feature. At this moment, to increase the joys of the worthy couple, Drudge suddenly assumed a scruple of courage, and, thrusting his red visage out of the coach, familiarly charged Moe Underhill with being "a thief and a runaway!"

To which the boy familiarly returned, "Hush your jaw, you old victim! I'll have my pay out of you yet, for the beatin' you guv me last Thanksgivin'-day!"

That no single incident might be wanting to complete the overwhelming catastrophe, Mr. Sim Skinnings, at this juncture, marched up to Mr. Smith Plevin, and with a determined manner said, "Sir, you were insolent, just now!" and, without further parley, Mr. Skinnings commenced an active assault on the person of the aforesaid Mr. Plevin. Now, Skinnings was a tall man, with an immoveable face, which looked as if it had been carved out of seasoned pine-timber, or, rather, as if all his features had been tied up, very early in life, in a hard knot, and he had found it impossible, ever since, to disentangle them. He therefore formed no very pleasant or playful belligerent, and, accordingly, began to drub his little antagonist horribly at arm's-length. Plevin, who, although not framed exactly on the heroic model, had some sparks of manhood in him, thought the game altogether too much on one side, and hastily imagining that the bargain would be vastly improved by introducing a second party into it, plunged his head directly into the waistcoat of Mr. Skinnings, and commenced plying his arms up and down into the face of that eminent gentleman, in a parallel line like the pistons of an engine; and Mr. Skinnings began to batter the dorsal possessions of Mr. Plevin, with a high, long sweep of his arms, after the manner of a smith's largest sledge-hammer.

Mr. Skinnings would have inevitably succeeded in breaking in sundry ribs of his antagonist, had it not been for a fortunate bill in chancery, of a monstrous solidity and thickness, which was slumbering in the little lawyer's hind coat-pocket; and Plevin would have undoubtedly disfigured the face of Skinnings had he not, in an early stage of the attempt made his knuckles sore by knocking against the hard bronze thereof. While this professional battle was proceeding, and general attention was attracted to its progress, Drudge thought it afforded a good opportunity for him to attempt a release from his imprisonment. With this purpose, he cautiously put his head out of one of the openings of the windows, and, shrinking his body to its smallest dimensions, endeavored to coax it through. He succeeded in passing it as far as his third rib, by forcible struggles, and there, for some time, he hung, neither able to advance nor recede, like a rash pickerel that has been caught in a net, and, plunging into one of the meshes, imagines it may glide through—fixed midway, its glassy eyes looking out upon a glorious prospect of escape, while its tail and the better part of its body quiver and wriggle with all the horror of confinement and fruitless toil! At length, by a sudden wrench, Old Drudge succeeded in restoring himself to his former position on the back seat of the carriage—and there he sat, shaking with the dampness of his prison—and shaking as if his only remaining chance of enfranchisement lay in bursting his prison to pieces by the violence of his tremors.

During all this time the combatants kept steadily at their business—growing more heated and furious every minute. Suddenly a cry of "fire! fire!" was heard in the upper part of the village, and the village engine was seen rattling along the main street, and bearing down directly upon the mob, gathered about Plevin and Skinnings, and, without a moment's delay, it began playing, under the direction of Tom Haddock, upon the belligerent attorneys. The thumping of the engine-arms, the clamors of the mob, and the shouts of the brawny fishermen, alarmed the hitherto quiet sorrel twins of Mr. Drudge, and thinking, perhaps, they had tarried long enough in the disagreeable village of Plum-pitts, they wheeled about, and clattering past the mob, just in time for Old Drudge to receive a discharge of the engine-pipe upon his person, they scampered off up Plum-pitts' hill, on the road to the Homestead.

Through these various events, the day had glided nearly to its close. Large, heavy shadows began to fall from the trees by the roadside, and, crowding nearer together, and dilating more and more every moment as the sun rapidly declined, they darkened the track upon which the driverless horses were travelling. Now and then the shadow of a locust or wild-cherry-tree, that stood solitary in the centre of a field would blink in, like some monstrous goblin, at the

window of the carriage, and remind its occupant that night was swiftly approaching. A tree-toad or cricket would repeat the tidings in a doleful voice, and Old Drudge, trembling with the chilliness of his prison and apprehension of some peril or other, chattered in reply.

They passed a swamp—and the wind came sighing and roaring through it like a mad devil, and a swollen stream rushed dismally through the tufts of dark grass and bog-weeds. Just as he had fairly passed this gloomy spot, he heard a rattling noise upon the roof of the coach, as if the branches of some overhanging tree were raking over it. He put out his head, timidly, to discover what it was—and received a violent stroke from some unseen object obliquely over the face. Thinking it might have been a straggling limb, as soon as he recovered from the shock, he thrust his face out of the opposite window. Again he received a stroke, heavier than the first, and a gruff voice exclaimed, "Now out of the other!" Poor Drudge, terrified and trembling, and not daring to disregard the behest of the invisible, fearfully exhibited his head from the other window. A third blow made his scone ring again—and the voice bawled, "Now the other!" He obeyed again—thwack!—thwack!—thwack! and a shower of violent blows rained about his ears and face until they brought blood. This game was kept up for a quarter of an hour—when the voice dismounted, and, thrusting into the carriage, whispered grimly, "Moe Und'rill's compliments to Mrs. Tishy Drudge, and tell her she can roast you for 'Thanksgivin', as you've been pounded tender!" A smart succession of sharp, quick strokes lit upon the backs and flanks of the sorrel brethren, and they hurried away as if they thought Mrs. Drudge herself was at their heels.

This unusual speed soon brought them to the door of the Homestead, and, in attempting to turn rapidly into the large gate that led to the corn-crib, they overturned the disastrous and ill-fated vehicle. At the point which they had selected for its overthrow, there was a huge, sharp-cornered rock, planted there to guard the gate-posts, and the overturn was accompanied with a loud crash. The work of the moment accomplished the grand purpose of the day; it shivered one of the carriage-doors, and left Old Drudge sprawling at the opening, with one leg sticking out of the opposite window in mid air. The sudden display of a light at the door of the house startled the animals, which had stopped and stood stock-still when the catastrophe occurred; they moved forward a few steps, and Old Drudge was detected crawling forth.

Bruised, frightened, and hungry as he was, he was glad to hobble up stairs and sneak supperless to bed, rather than encounter one of those domestic tempests which had so often rattled about his head, and given him, although not an aged man, the aspect of a weather-beaten sea-captain, and the familiar title of Old Drudge.

## THE UNBURIED BONES.

"Lost Beauty, I will die,  
But I will thee recover."

Sir R. Fanshaw's QUERRER POR SOLO QUERRER.

ABOUT midway between Long island sound and the Hudson, there is a gloomy ravine called Dark Hollow, which ploughs, as it were, a broad and deep furrow between two high ridges of land. The Hollow itself is filled with sombre woods, and constitutes a sort of legendary womb of earth, in which tradition has for many years bred its monsters; supplying the neighborhood with a brood of as lusty and good-for-nothing fables, as gossip could wish to chirp over at a winter's fireside. Among others, there is the story of the spectre of the stranger that was drowned in the neighboring pond (whose body was never discovered), walking in this dim valley in his sleeves, with his yellow vest thrown open, with one short boot and one long one, and without a hat, just as he appeared before his fishing-boat was overturned—the very costume in which he went to the bottom.

Then there was the Yankee that hung himself on the great black walnut-tree, by the brook, with an empty cider flask in his pocket, and whose ghost has so unquenchable a thirst, that it has been heard, any time the last twenty years, crying (in a thick voice, and apparently half-over seas) for "more cider!" and "another pull at the jug—only one more!" and to the thirsty propensities of which ghost, the owners of the land below the Hollow attribute the frequent dryness that afflicts the channel of the brook.

Then, on the side of the Hollow, and under the shelter of rugged and sturdy oaks, that clamber up in the dim light, as if eager to breathe a purer air, lies nestling, away from the observation of the keenest eye, Gaby's Hole; a mysterious nook, in which, the story goes, a gang of hardy counterfeitters, many years ago, established a mint, and spouted forth thence, as from a fountain, their streams of impure coinage.

It is said that ruffian forms are even now sometimes seen flitting about the mouth of the Hole, and that the glare of lawless fires lit up so long since, is in cloudy nights reflected against the sky. The noise of hammers, too, often mingles with the puffing of a huge bellows, and, combined, they startle the damp cricket from his low pallet on the earth, and the fire-bug from his light-house elevation in the mountain pine.

It was near this haunted region, and reclining on a slope of the opposite ridge, that Francis Whortle gazed into the Hollow. It was a summer's afternoon and he had lingered on that particular spot, thus questioning the depths of the mysterious realm, he knew not why, for several hours.

There was something in his past history that might explain this brooding habit, which was

wont to seize and bind him as with a spell by the side of running streams, in the twilight of thoughtful sunsets, or beneath the melancholy boughs of mighty trees.

Francis Whortle was a youth in the very prime and spring-time of life, and yet clouds came and passed across his brow as if it had been that of an aged man, or one on the remotest verge of suffering and care-stricken manhood. The story of his sorrow was simple enough, though with a touch of almost romantic singularity. He had loved a beautiful girl—and, as he thought, had won her affection in return; when, suddenly, and without any hint or token of such an event, she had vanished from the neighborhood—vanished like a spirit, none could tell at what precise moment, from what spot, nor whither. Hope exhausted itself in hoping, and dreaming visions of her return, and Invention fell dead at the anxious feet of the bereaved man's friends—but she never more came back. At night a light form, beautiful with the hue and the grace of youth, stood often at his bedside, and smiled upon him with a delicate finger on its dewy lips—and vanished silent and smoothly as the air. Spring came, the bright season of expectation and promise, and still she tarried. Summer perished in the deep-green woods and was buried beneath the Autumn leaves, yet the lost one was not found. Thus time chased hour on hour, and the skies smiled and threatened, and after long lingering, the swallow and the pigeon returned them their strange absence far away, but the sweet girl came not in their track, returned not to haunt her own familiar dwelling nor to build her bower under the calm old eaves of her childhood's home. From the hour of that sad disappearance, Whortle had yielded himself to an unseen influence which led him about from place to place, as in a dream. From that moment he had rambled hither and thither, through wood and field, and placing himself on some chosen spot, with the soft meadow-brook's murmur in his ear, or the gentle sound of waving branches, he would strain forward with an eager gaze and anxious look, as if he awaited the sudden presence of the vanished Creature from earth or air.

So busy was his brain with the image of the lost one, so nimble and restless his fancy in forgoing comfort for his poor, lone heart, that every object in nature at times assumed the fairy shape and seemed to walk forth from amid surrounding things, palpable to the eye, fresh and lovely as in the moment before she had gone for ever. That young man's single grief brought back for a time all the fair "humanities of old religion," and often in the deep wood he started at a gentle form gliding swiftly, like a dryad, before his view; or gazed wildly on a sweet face smiling responsive to his own from the untroubled fountain, a nymph-like countenance, perishing with the first breath of the gazer. It had become his sole employment to people all the fields, and meadows, and mar-

gins, and woodland glades, with the spiritual likeness of his vanished mistress.

With this hope warm at his heart he peered earnestly into the deepening shadows of the Hollow. In a few moments an airy and graceful shape sprang, as if from the covert of a wild vine; it was the accustomed gentle form; it turned its face upon the lover; it smiled—and—as the young man lives—it beckons him from his lofty seat. He doubts—it pauses—a sorrowful look darkens its fair countenance—again it smiles and renews the token. This time he will not doubt nor waver. He gains his feet, and with unusual speed hurries after the fair apparition. Within a few paces of her, however, he slackens his steps, and follows in awe and wonder. Straight through the Counterfeiters' dark defile she takes her way, without hindrance from stone, bush, or tree: following, as he may, he pursues her till she winds through a clump of tall, gloomy trees, and steps out upon an open space. He has stumbled but once, and that was a little way back, upon a rusted spade, standing against the remains of an old forge or rural fire-place. The gentle apparition crosses the glade; she reaches a white object that stands out boldly against the dark earth, and turning once more upon him with a sad smile, she melts, like a dew or a snow-flake into the earth. For a moment he pauses like one who has seen some strange object in sleep; but quickly surmounting fear and wonder, he hastens to the spot where the visionary Creature was lost to his gaze, with a high hope beating at his heart, and rising up and looking out at his gleaming and eager eyes. He discovered a mouldering heap of bones, and as his eye wandered about here and there, they fell upon something that glimmered in the grass: a quick, faint splendor, as of some lightning-bug or cricket trailing about his little lantern from one blade or one green hillock to another. But it shone too steadily for their transitory light, and as his thoughts were fixed upon it as if it had been the lurking eye of a serpent, he stooped and took it in his hand. It was a plain gold ring, soiled slightly by the weather, and, with the inscription "*Ruth Greenleaf.*" Holding the relic in his hand, he stood like one lost in reverie, gazing by turns on it and on the mouldering bones at his feet.

Where he had found the ring the fragment of an arm-bone lay, but the hand to which it had belonged was crumbled and gone. He now felt that he was standing by the mortal remains of the fair creature who had disappeared so long ago, and borne with her his heart into the deep forest. It too had mouldered like the bones before him; though it had a living tomb, his own breast. The apparition had guided him kindly to this spot to fulfil a sweet and sacred duty: the burial of these fair, white relics. How she had perished there, in that strange, lone place, he could not guess; whether by swift stroke of lightning, by serpent's poison tooth, by the sharp pointed pain of sudden mal-

ady, or by a deadly hand. The last seemed probable, and he thought at once that she had been murdered by the ruffian counterfeiters, upon whose guilty labor she may have come in some one of her girlish rambles through the gloomy hollow. They had slain her lest she should disclose their hiding-place, and had fled. The disordered condition in which he had observed Gaby's Hole, as he passed rapidly through it, strengthened and justified this dim conjecture. But though she had lain long in the chill air, while the green trees were looking down upon her and shaking their green glories in vain as a shroud over her, the hour of her sepulture had come. Kneeling at the foot of the relics, and breathing forth a brief prayer, Whortle stepped back a little, and returned with a rusty spade in his hand. Selecting a spot on which the sunlight fell in the pleasant hours of the day, and where no gloomy nor ill-boding tree cast its shadow, he struck his spade into the mould. As he delved the earth, many thoughts swelled into his heart and moistened his eyes.

Here have you lain and crumbled, thought he, while I have lived framing idle fables, dreaming vainly over the past, and questioning the future. The soft spring-shower descends, and the wild-rose 'takes off its infant mask in the meadow, and discloses its blushing face to the sun, and air, but in vain have those gentle drops fallen on you, pale, passionless relics. The Winds and the Elements have swept the earth, and the air, and the waters quickening all things into life; but you, even the loud thunder has passed by, and left dull, slumbrous, and motionless as ever. Here the fresh dawn has poured its ray, and kindled voices and harmonies without number in the breast of this wild wood; silent, mournful, and dismantled it has found, and left you, once the glorious residence of speech and music. Shrunken from a fair and fruit-like beauty, where all eyes once dwelt, you have rested here—visited by all things in nature—the wind, the sunbeam, the shower and the evening glory, unknown, honorless, and unadored. With emotions and fancies like these he shaped the grave.

Simple as was the whole scene, it was a subject for the painter's finest pencil—for it was tinged with many colors of the true sublime. A spade, a youth, and a few crumbling bones. What is there in these to awaken deep feeling or reverential thought? It is a spiritual picture in the midst of busy life. On the high ridge they are gathered with the setting sun streaming full upon them, while on one side husbandmen, joyous with the spirit of plenty, are turning their winrows; on another, nearer by, on the margin of the pond, a boisterous group are dragging their well-laden fish-net ashore, blessing Fortune and the favoring tide. Beyond the hollow, up on the by-road that passes through the woods, a country school is just let loose, and Childhood tumbles with its satchel and sportive face into the open air, and

looks up laughingly to the clear sky. And there into that neat farm-house, with its newly-painted front, a troop of weddeners is hastening.

On Whortle delves, and the grave is finished. Gently he lays the relics in its bosom, and ere he casts back the damp earth on its kindred earth, he stands, leaning on his simple companion in the labor, and gazes long and earnestly down into the hollow mould.

He has buried the hallowed bones, and planted an evergreen at their head, and as the mel-low light of the dying day streams through the trees, borrowing a new hue, to add to its thousand colors, from them, he turns his steps mournfully away, as if he had laid his own heart there with his mistress' dust.

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## PARSON HUCKINS'S FIRST APPEARANCE.

At the close of a day in the early part of autumn, a small-built gentleman, in a black suit and snowy neckerchief, was sitting in the desk of Chatham chapel, with his head resting upon his folded hands. From the tall side-windows, the purple shadows of evening fell upon his person, and thronged about his elevated place of repose, as if they would bury him entirely from the gaze. The whole vast body of the building began to be filled with darkness and gloom, and the different objects—the pews—the galleries and aisles, were blended together, and assumed whatever shapes the fancy chose to give them. The black-clad gentleman, the sole tenant of this realm of shadows and confusion, was the (Rev. John Huckins, a righteous man of God, who was born with the happiest possession that one who intends to make piety the business of his life can fall heir to, and that was, an indescribably meek and evangelical length of feature. He was, at the present time, the clergyman of a Christian congregation that worshipped in the chapel, and at the particular moment when he is introduced to the reader, was reposing after the fatigues of the afternoon Wednesday service, and at the same time awaiting the attendance of a few professors on a prayer-meeting, which was to be held there preparatory to an evening discourse. In the slumber which he was enjoying, images of past scenes—of times long bygone—vanished away, far away in the dim regions of youth, mingled with the events and things and creatures of yesterday, and at length he dreamed that the very chapel, in which he was seated, was touched by the strange magic of sleep, and was passing through one of those wild and wizard changes which occur only in dreams. He beheld before him two beings, with something mortal in their garments and bearing, mixed with more that was unearthly and spectral in their look and the tones of their voice.

One was short and round-shouldered, with a



long-waisted roundabout on, and the other a pale meager figure, with sweat upon his brow, which seemed as if it might be the death-damp, which he had neglected to wipe away in his hurried emergence into light. They both busied themselves in unhinging the pew-doors, and with huge piles of them upon their shoulders—far greater, it seemed, than mere mortals could stagger under—they tottered down the aisles, and, disappearing at the preacher's feet, returned in a few minutes empty-handed, and bore away a second load. While they were engaged in this singular task, they now and then interchanged a word with each other.

"What do we have to-night?" asked the round-shouldered man.

"The 'Devil's Due Bill,'" answered his companion.

"What! 'The Devil's Due Bill Honored'—in which old Roberts is so capital in Wiggle?"

"The same, the very same!" returned the meager figure, "and I thank Heaven we've got possession again. It was a shame to let these canting dogs bark so long in old Chatham; and I could not lay easy in my grave till I helped get up another good old piece in her walls!"

"You're right, Bill—prompter snuff me out if you a'n't!" assented the round-shouldered personage. "I wonder if they'll all be here to-night?"

"The whole company, in full force, you may depend upon it, and we'll go through it in less time than we ever did before—music and all—take my word for it."

When they had completely disposed of the doors, they commenced sacking the pews themselves, and carried off the red and brown cushions, muttering, "Bare benches is good enough for the half-price bottoms of the pit!" After this they swept the hymn-books, testaments, &c., which they found on the pew-shelves, into a green-baize, and hurried them away with the same eagerness, grumbling forth something or other about the "saints in the playhouse!"

While these two personages were engaged in this way, as many as half-a-dozen saw-looking men were perched about the floor of the building, on ladders, with painters' jackets on, and employed in swiftly executing miniature scenes from Shakspeare and other dramatists, on the naked panel-work of the galleries. In the meanwhile, hammers were plying in every quarter of the house; nails were drawn and driven, parts of the building taken down and parts renewed, with all the dexterity and despatch of jugglery. Presently, all the artisans disappeared, whither, no one could guess; and Huckins, astonished at what he saw, and every moment expecting some greater wonder, now discovered men and women in gay dresses, laughing, and full of frolic, entering the first gallery, while instead of the humble believers and penitents whom he had expected to detect creeping up the aisle to prayer-meeting, whole hosts of robust sinners, and boisterous boys and 'prentices poured in upon the floor of the house,

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and took possession of the seats directly before his face. In a moment more he heard the faint tinkling of a bell, and, turning round, discovered an immense curtain, with the picture of a huge woman, with flowing robes and a yellow crown on her head, rolling gradually toward the ceiling; and now, for the first time, as he took his seat among the spectators, the conviction entered his mind that he was in Chatham theatre, a wild, wicked boy, yet with some germs of childish innocence and purity blossoming about his heart, and not the hard, hypocritical man, seemingly holy and pure in outward act, while all within was barrenness, guile, and a dull, gloomy heathendom. The first scene that opened upon the audience, exhibited what seemed to be the committee-room of a church, in which were assembled some seven or eight men, transacting business connected with their office of trustees or deacons. In dress and demeanor they resembled men with whom Huckins was familiar, although their size and lineaments in some respects were different. The prominent personage of the group was a turtle-shaped, middle-sized man, with a brown wig and wrinkled countenance, expressive of a dogmatical temper and sturdy self-will.

"It shall be so!" cried this magnate, striding up and down the stage, and flourishing a heavy walking-stick. "I have made up my mind to that point, gentlemen. He has the genuine evangelical spirit, I am confident, and that's enough for me."

"And for me," added a second committee-man. "He's not a bad speaker, too, for I sat beneath the back gallery, and heard distinctly every word that he uttered."

"I stationed myself behind a post," said a third, "and took the exact gauge of his voice. It is a high tenor, and suits an oblong, low-roofed building like ours, exactly. He has my vote."

"The spirit is all that is needed," rejoined a fourth, "the pious, Bible spirit. This is arms, legs, and voice, to a godly preacher."

"You are right, my friends," resumed the first speaker, smiling complacently upon his supporters, "very right, and if he had a voice as rough as the Rocky mountains—"

"But consider, Mr. Huff," interposed a tall, lantern-faced man, "we have learned from his confidential servant, Wiggle, that he writes his sermons in an overcoat, with his hat on, and a small bundle always packed up and lying on his table. He isn't in the missionary service and liable to be summoned away to Burampooter or Burmah at a moment's notice, and what do all these travelling preparations mean? Eh?"

"Genius!" answered Mr. Huff, peremptorily. "Genius and the Holy Ghost! Look what a face he has, too. Why the exhibition of that face alone at the gate of heaven would obtain his instant admission. It's the face of a cherub, Higgs!"

"As Higgs, my senior partner, says," began a timid little man, who was rather short of

wind, and, consequently, always cut short in his attempted observation, as in the present case. "Wiggle, his confidential—"

"Vexation take Wiggle!" cried Mr. Huff. "Gentlemen, shall we put it to vote? Are you ready?" In a few minutes, after the circulation of a respectable black beaver hat among the members of the committee, the Rev. John Huckins was announced as duly elected pastor of the ——— Church.

The previous astonishment and wonder of the parson was not a little increased at beholding his own election thus passing before his eyes, very much in the same manner as it must have passed in private, when he was a candidate before these self-same gentlemen, who were thus mysteriously presented to him in the full possession of their official functions.

The scene now shifted, and in the place of the deacons in their committee-room, Huckins beheld the parlor of a respectable private dwelling in which were assembled about twenty females, of all ages, old, young, and many in the middle period of life.

"What a powerful discourse!" exclaimed one of them, a large woman, with an ugly expression of countenance.

"So earnest, too!" said a young lady. "Brother George counted the strokes of his arm upon the cushion, and thinks he rose a hundred in the course of his sermon: besides the two prayers. He is a divine preacher!"

"This fiery zeal of his will keep us busy furnishing pulpit covers it is true," said an aged female, "but the Lord be blessed! my eyesight continues good, and my right hand hath not yet forgot its cunning: I can be serviceable to the church even in my old age in this matter. Smite the sinner like a strong man, and we'll supply the red damask, or plush of good quality, as long as the Lord continues our brother in the ministry."

"I propose," said the large lady, "that we make the Reverend John Huckins a life member of the 'Pottawatomy Society,' and that a committee be named to wait upon the distinguished gentleman to notify him of his election, and request him to deliver a series of discourses, on the importance of clothing juvenile Indians in slops and dickies, in aid of the funds of the Pottawatomy Association!" This motion was unanimously carried, and the large lady was named as said committee. Much further general conversation occurred, followed by a scriptural banquet of hot rolls and preserves, and the "Society" dispersed to their respective residences.

To his utter astonishment, the next scene represented a room, in every respect corresponding with his own study; and to his great horror, he felt himself suddenly lifted from his seat in the pit, and by some unseen agency placed by the side of a small table upon the stage and fronting the gaze of an immense audience. In a moment after his abrupt metamorphosis from the pit, a little man in a buff com-

plexion and buff-colored pantaloons to match a bob-tailed coat and skull-cap, with a brown loaf under one arm, and a bowl in his hand, entered, with a comic salutation to the audience and an irresistible grin on his visnomy, and was greeted on his appearance, as if he were a favorite performer. It was Roberts, Old Roberts, the droll and comedian of Old Chatham theatre, and Huckins at once recognised in him one of the actors whom he had seen on that same stage many long years ago when a boy. The character which this quaint performer at present personated, was that of the confidential servant of the Rev. John Huckins, over whom he seems to have possessed a singular mastery, which he had an equally singular mode of exhibiting.

"Well, Wiggle," said Huckins, constrained by some mysterious influence to take part in the play that was, or seemed to be, performing: "Salary, three thousand—house-rent free, besides an open account with every member of the congregation. That's a handsome business!"

"Rather handsome, I should say!" replied Wiggle. "Summ'at better than looking through a noose, like a starved steer through an ox-yoke, in this fashion." And running a rapid noose in his pocket-handkerchief, he threw it over the head of the Reverend gentleman, and drew it up till his face reddened like an autumnal sunset, while the audience encouraged the manœuvre by the most clamorous applause. "There," continued Wiggle, loosening his halter, "I'll let you off this time, but mind, I'm to have twenty per cent. and marriage fees!"

"I thought," returned Huckins, "it was to be the naked twenty per cent. Nothing was said about the fees before."

"Oh, the fees—I must have the fees, or do you see," said Wiggle, knocking the parson's broad-brimmed hat over his eyes, "you'll be furnished with a night-cap that admits no waking, and when it's drawn on you, go to sleep for good and all."

"Well, well," said the parson, "take your own way, but be careful and not a word about the—"

"A—r—"

"Hush," said Huckins, "don't breathe the word in this hemisphere, or we're done for!"

"You must pay me the fees too," continued the remorseless Wiggle, "as you receive them. They're generally paid in gold, and there's a premium you know. D'ye understand?"

And to awaken Mr. Huckins to a lively perception of what he meant, he punched him playfully in different parts of the person, and concluded by placing his hand gathered like a trumpet at his ear, and uttering, in a portentous whisper, the word "Arson!"

Now whether the terror and paleness which invariably afflicted Huckins at the mention of this dissyllable arose from the retrospect and reminiscence of some past conflagration in which he had participated, or from his looking



forward, with prophetic eye, to the "great burning," in which he might, perhaps, reasonably expect to participate more deeply, it would not be wise, to conjecture at this early stage of the business.

"Do you think there's the slightest—the faintest chance of detection?" gasped Huckins.

"None at all, not as much as would convict a grasshopper of wearing pumps, I warrant you, if you'll keep your face stretched out to the right length. Do you practise as I told you?"

"Yes twice a day."

"Mornin' and evenin' I suppose, before a glass. You'd better stretch it in a boot-jack than let it dry and shrink up—for you'd look like the very devil if it wasn't for that smooth face of yours, Jack."

"You haven't said anything of the overcoat and so forth—have you?" asked Huckins.

"Only hinted a little of it to Higgs, one of the committee—who was rather unfavorable to your election—thinking it might give him an idea of what a great preacher you was, and what wonderful talent you had to write your sermons in a box-coat!"

"Be careful, Wiggle—for Higgs is a sharp, keen man, and already suspects something: and it's safest to be ready for travel at short notice, isn't it?"

"By all means. Be prudent, and we'll feather our nests and fill our pockets out of these innocents yet. Preach stanch sermons—strong flavor of brimstone—make long prayers and loud ones, and live on vegetables in public—and our fortunes are made!"

"Ay, ay," said the parson, "don't fear me; and hark, Wiggle, be particularly careful not to have anything to say to that fellow Morfit. I believe he knew me when I was here before."

"What, the lean affidavit-maker?—I wouldn't speak to the starveling, if we two were on a desert island famishing—if he had a broiled woodcock in his hand, basted in its own drippings, and would divide it for the asking."

Here the facetious Wiggle slipped his scull-cap into his coat pocket, perched the bowl upon the crown of his head, took a huge mouthful from the brown loaf under his right arm, lifted his coat-tails in a playful manner toward the audience with his left, and amid a tempest of huzzas and shouts of "Old Roberts for ever!" made his exit. The tall woman with her flowing robes and yellow crown, gradually emerged from the canvass as the curtain fell, and Parson Huckins seated, he could not tell where, in the confusion of his dream, heard the free comments of the audience on what had passed.

"He's a desperate villain," said a young man in a pea-jacket, crushing a play-bill in his hand as he spoke. "But Wiggle's too much for him!"

"I've seen many just such weasel-faced fellows as this parson!" said a dry, little old man, "And I wouldn't trust one of 'em with my finger parings."

"What do you think will become of Huc-

kins?" asked a sharp-nosed man, with eyes that projected like a lobster's; leaning forward into the face of the dry old man.

"Why, he'll be hung," answered the little old man, emphatically, "or turn politician, which will amount to the same thing in the end!"

"I think he'll marry the old lady of the Potawatowamy Association," suggested the young gentleman in the pea-jacket.

"We shall see!" said the old man:—the bell tinkled—the curtain rose, and exhibited the same scene as the last, with Huckins at the small table, and Mr. Huff seated opposite.

"If it could be made out scripturally, it would afford me great satisfaction," said Mr. Huff.

"It can be, sir, I assure you; I shall be able to show beyond doubt or controversy, that every human being now on the face of the earth must suffer the flames, except my humble self, and the majority of the deacons of — church; in which number, Mr. Thomas Huff, I am happy to say, holds no mean position."

"Thank you, sir, thank you; but have you sufficient texts and apposite passages?"

"Ample, my good sir, ample," answered Parson Huckins. "Excerpts and quotations from Isaiah and the Revelation, as long and heavy as the weaver's beam, wherewith Goliath went forth against the children of Israel."

"Really," continued the pharisaical little Mr. Huff, rubbing his hands and clucking quietly like a hen—"Really, this will be the happiest event of my life since my election as deacon. What a pleasant time we will have in heaven, Brother Huckins! a little select company of saints, feeding on the pleasant pastures of the skies, like the remnant of a countless flock of ewes and sheep, scattered hither and thither by a storm; while hundreds of thousands of poor wretches will be groaning and burning and crying out in Tophet: provided you get them there scripturally."

"It shall be done, sir!" said Huckins, confidently.

"Mark me, I deny the doctrine—though I must confess it looks reasonable—unless you support it stoutly by texts and bandages of Holy Writ!"

"Fear not," again answered the parson, "I will bring the Bible to bear directly upon the point, as if it had been shot from the mouth of a cannon: and many will be the poor sinner that would like to come under our blanket, when the tempest and lightning, and bombs and hand-grenades of Almighty wrath are falling about his ears!"

"We are safe?" asked Mr. Huff, with an anxious wrinkle on his brow. "You are sure of that?"

"Beyond peradventure—as secure from hell as if we were insured in a fire company," answered Parson Huckins, somewhat profanely; but it was in a dream, and perhaps the poor man knew not what he spake. Anyhow, the

two grave and pious gentlemen here sat quiet about the space of a minute, casting their eyes toward the roof, and indulging in inward laughter, which at length overflowed, and ran out at their eyes and over their faces like tears.

After this, the parson produced a Bible and a map of the world: and proceeded to illustrate his views.

"This," said he, pointing out one text, "this carries off all the heathen—all these lands around which I have drawn a black line: African, Patagonian, Indian, Bedouin Arab, dwarf Laplander—and the whole brood. This," selecting a second, "despatches the Catholic countries—marked red in the map—and this undoubted passage," taking a third, "deals the fire upon Protestant Europe and Botany Bay."

"Botany Bay!" exclaimed Huff, in astonishment.

"Yes—there's a special clause for New South Wales in this text. Nothing else could be intended. As for America, there's no need of scriptural denunciation, for we know from our own eyes' testimony that it deserves no less. The state of moral destitution in this country, Mr. Huff, is absolutely awful! Sodom and Gomorrah!—Sodom and Gomorrah!"

"Will the town of Greenwich, Connecticut, be saved, think you?" asked Huff.

"Not a soul, from the town clerk to the county judge," answered the parson, who knew that said town of Greenwich was Huff's birthplace, and that he had been handled rather severely there by the county court, in a little affair of apportioning money from his pocket for the support of a hedge-born child.

"Thank God!" thereupon cried the deacon, when Huckins had uttered this verdict, and showed him where he had entirely blotted out the irreligious borough with a huge ink spot.

"I feel grateful to you, Parson Huckins, for these comforting doctrines," said Huff, taking the parson warmly by the hand. "Continue steadfast in preaching and upholding them—and that matter of the increase of salary—you understand?" And with this broken suggestion he departed.

The curtain dropped, and the next scene discovered Mr. Higgs, solus, striding up and down the stage, apparently laboring under high excitement.

"This is not to be borne," said he. "Here comes a fellow, the Lord knows whence, and exhibits a furlong of feature one day over the pulpit top, and consigns the whole audience peremptorily to the pit, as if they were a basket of spoiled salmon, and the next day, as the Lord liveth, he is chosen paster of the congregation. Why I would rather hear a fire-bell ring in midsummer than his voice: his tones are those of a radish-girl, and his gestures the contortions of a rheumatic sailor undergoing the bastinado. I hate such fellows worse than a stone-mason hates a rat about his foundations. He deals his brimstone about as freely as if the whole audience were infected with the bilious fever, or were a

parcel of scoundrel dogs with the distemper. He seems to have constituted himself a sort of eternal watchman to cry in the great burning. His discourse is stuck full of pitch and cinders, and one could not be reasonably surprised to see him spit flame. But somehow he hath obtained strange mastery over Huff (a credulous, ignorant old man, who believes everything he hears, and a self-willed one, who strives to impose his novel discoveries on every one he meets) and other of our people. The Pottawatomy Association is again in motion—and Heaven knows what absurdity these cackling old women will give birth to!"

Mr. Higgs now made his exit, and the next scene displayed a cobbler's stall, in which a long lean man was seated on a bench at work, and standing by his side our old friend Wiggle.

"So you find this a profitable business," said Wiggle, "this affidavit making?"

"It helps a little in hard times," answered the cobbler. "I can turn off at the rate of three affidavits and two pairs of boots a week, and that pays pretty well."

"But Mr. Morfit, I should think there would be no limit to the amount of business you might drive in the former line. If I understand it, all you have to do is to sign your name and kiss the book."

"Ah! you know very little of the profession," said Morfit, with a sigh; "I have found, from considerable experience, that I can't stand more than one affidavit a day. I tried for a little while after I commenced, but I found the oaths lay heavy on my conscience at night, and I put it on regimen, one a day."

"Who are your chief employers, Mr. Morfit?"

"The quack doctors: I supply them with sworn certificates. A politician now and then engages me just before an election; and I occasionally go into court, in important cases, to help out the evidence."

"What are your terms? So much a folio, or such a per centage on the profits?"

"I see, Mr. Wiggle, you are entirely ignorant of this branch of business," said Morfit, with a ghastly grin. "A gentleman wants something in my line, he comes in, 'Morfit,' says he, 'an affidavit on the virtues of the Buffalo Embrocation,' and a pair of light boots, both ready by Saturday.' Very well, say I. 'In Court,' says an attorney—I have an extensive acquaintance among attorneys—'In court, Morfit, Saturday morning, case of Borrowe vs. Bustard, action of libel, swear bad character for Bustard—and two pairs of best made French slippers for plaintiff.'"

"Well," said Wiggle, "when will you have this affidavit of mine done, about Huckins?"

"Let me see, this is Wednesday; two certificates for Dr. Spike, that his pills are valuable in clarifying eider—swear to two barrels cleared of sediment by a single box; affidavit for the politician, that Quirks, opposition candidate, knocked his cartman in the head with a cart-

ring, and destroyed four square inches of skull, because said cartman refused to vote his employer's ticket!—This is a busy week, Wiggle, just before the fall election, but as you're an old friend, I'll have this of yours for you to-morrow noon."

"Do you understand what its contents are to be?"

"That deponent was acquainted with said Huckins in Massachusetts, while he was studying theology; knew him to be pious, correct in deportment, highly esteemed, &c."

"That's it, Morfit," said Wiggle; "it's only to satisfy the private scruples of one of the deacons, who says he never heard of Huckins before. To-morrow noon."

"True as a heel-tap!" answered the cobbler. "What's the number of the parson's dwelling?"

"Oh, I'll call for it," said Wiggle; "but our number's ——— street."

"Very good. Good day, Wiggle."

"Good day to your honor!" and Wiggle departed, with an entirely original grin, which drew his whole countenance into a single wrinkle, by some mysterious motion of the muscles, in the same manner as an old lady's work-bag is drawn into a snug ball of silk, by aid of the string.

The audience encored; he returned, and renewed the wonderful face, again departed—the scene shifts—and enter the ugly old lady of the "Pottawatomy Association," and Mr. Higgins.

"As I was saying, Mr Higgins," said the old lady. "~~I am to wait upon~~ Parson Huckins to-morrow, and notify him of his life-membership in the Pottawatomy, and solicit him to deliver a course of lectures, or a single lecture, on the present indelicate style of Indian dress, and the propriety of substituting trousers and body-coats in its stead. You will accompany me, will you, Mr. Higgins?"

"Higgs, my senior partner, says—" proceed ed Mr. Higgins.

"Oh, yes, I understand," interposed the old lady. "If the medal was ready we might call upon him to-day. Whether to present it to him standing or kneeling—"

"I should think," again said the unfortunate Higgins, who seemed destined never to finish a sentence, "as Higgs—"

"Or with my hat on or off," continued the old lady, not heeding her companion; "in my new calico, or my cloth habit. I must consult the society. I never would have undertaken this task if I had known how many difficulties and perplexities would attend it. Anyhow, we must elect Parson Huckins a member of our 'Short-stitch and Long-stitch Benevolent Union;' and then I shall resign!"

"Mrs. Furbelow!" exclaimed Higgins.

"He's a sweet man—a pious, sweet man; I could almost worship him—Oh, Huckins, it's too good for my soul!"

"Mrs. Furbelow!" again cried Higgins, "at what hour—"

"To-morrow noon—to-morrow noon!" ex-

claimed Mrs. Furbelow, waving him away; "meet me at the parson's—sweet Parson Huckins!"

The act curtain fell, and as the music (which had a wild, unearthly tone in that buffing, where it had been so long silent) played its full tide of melody upon the audience from its airy tubes, the groundling critics again indulged in strictures on the performance.

"The marriage will surely come on in the last act!" said the young man in the pea-jacket. "Mrs. Furbelow sighs like a broken-winded bellows, and means to trap the parson."

"There'll be a riot yet," said the sharp-nosed man with the lobster eyes, "don't you think there will?"

"No such thing!" answered the dry, little, old man. "Huckins will be made a bishop or secretary of state before the play's done. Wiggle wasn't as good in this act."

"He'll brighten up in the next!" timidly suggested the young man in the pea-jacket.

"He will!" answered the dry, little, old man, sententiously.

A shrill whistle was heard, the bell tinkled, the curtain rose, and disclosed the worthy Mr. Morfit, in an open street, eagerly eyeing a respectable two-story house, with the name of "John Huckins" on a broad silver door-plate.

"This is the house," said the affidavit-maker, "and I must get a sight of the reverend gentleman—so as to know his person if I should be confronted with him. That must be him," casting his eye down the street, towards a person approaching in that direction—"black suit of broadcloth—auburn hair (making entries in a note-book)—a slow, cautious gait—limps a little—about the middle height; now for his face—long featured, pious—good heavens! it's my old friend—hush! I won't mention it in the street, or we'll have a hanging on the nearest lamp-post—ho! here comes Wiggle, too—I must tell him some lie about my being here; though I needn't swear to it. How are you, Wiggle?"

"Ah! my man of oaths and French slippers, my pink of swearing and sole-leather—how are you, and what are you doing in this quarter of the town?" said Wiggle, striking the open palm of his broad hand upon his back, like the fluke of a Norwegian sperm-whale of the largest class.

"Merely looking out for a few subjects for affidavits," answered Morfit. "Two of the aldermen, opposed to our party, live in those two double-houses."

"Well, what can you swear of them?" asked Wiggle; "that they are four feet about the girth, and split the seams of their coats open with fat, like a full peascod in the month of August?"

"No; but one of them has purple embossed paper in his fanlights—and the other, a span of high-headed light bay horses."

"Suppose you could swear one of them kept a stud of wild tigers, and had a polar-bear for a coachman—would it help you any?"

*delivered Higgs  
as  
cold - Huff!*

"To be sure, I'd give any amount of money if I could swear to that effect, without being set down by the whole city for as great a liar as the town-clock!"

"How so, my worthy fellow?"

"Why, you see," responded Morfit, with a sly leer, "quadrupeds and villains is intimately connected; if a man rides on horseback, he's a rogue; in a one-horsed vehicle, he's a scamp; and if he ventures in a coach or barouche of his own—God save us!—he's a desperate rascal. Let him trudge on foot, and wear out sole-leather—and, Heaven bless him! he's an honest man; poor, but honest. That's our creed!"

"Well, I must in, in spite of your wonderful new discovery in ethics," said Wiggle, working his eyeballs with his thumbs, so as to impress Morfit with the conviction that it was all there—namely, in his eye. "We're to have grand times at our house, this morning." Two of the trustees is to call—the Botherwhatamy Society presents a pewter dining-set to the parson, and I'm to serve up a basket of the 'pure juice of the grape'—good day, Morfit—another time—happy to see you—good day—good day!"

And he glided in at the hall-door, with both hands extended, as if in the act of swimming out of reach of further dialogue with the affidavit-maker.

"Well," said Morfit, when left alone, "I may as well disappear too, and I'm afraid I shall be obliged to adulterate your 'pure juice' with a few drops of that unpleasant elixir called justice. Here's for the police." Stretching his neck, like some meager bird of prey, bringing his coat close together, and knocking his hat over his brows, he put off at full speed, down the street.

In a few minutes the stage was occupied by the ugly old lady of the Pottawatamy Association, who came in puffing and blowing, and looking like Vesuvius on the eve of an eruption, with Higgins running at her side.

"A sultry day, Mr. Higgins," said she, pausing and unfurling a white pocket-handkerchief, wherewith she wiped her picturesque face. "A very sultry day—be careful, or that medal will melt—see that it's snug in the basket, if you please, Mr. Higgins."

"Yes, ma'am," answered the little gentleman, uttering the first sentence that he had been allowed to finish since his appearance in the performance.

"I wish I had thought to pack it in ice!" said Mrs. Furbelowe, looking wise, "it would be so cooling and grateful to John's hands."

"What John?" gasped Higgins, in amazement. "What John are you speaking?"

"Oh, the parson—I meant the parson," answered the old lady, blushing slightly, "I was too scriptural, that was all. In the New Testament, the apostles and disciples are so familiar, it's really a picture to the mind, Mr. Higgins. I wish Mr. Huckins would allow me to call him John; it would be delightful, wouldn't it?"

Before Higgins could furnish an answer, they were within Parson Huckins's hall, and the door had closed.

In a moment or two more, the two deacons, Messrs. Huff and Higgs, were discovered passing through the street, in the same direction.

"What think you of our new parson, now?" said Huff, with a smile on his wrinkled visage.

"Worse and worse," answered Higgs; "I have not seen the certificates he promised, yet, and, from the violent language of condemnation that he uses in the pulpit, toward others, I doubt, more and more, his own Christian character. Anyhow, I should like to have some evidence of it."

"You are on your road to it," said Huff. "If certain proofs that he is to lay before me, are not sufficient, you must be, in truth, hard of belief—strong, overwhelming, gospel proofs!"

"Some, such, I need," said Higgs, firmly, "and nothing less will serve my purpose. Christian churches, Mr. Huff, are getting too much in the habit of selecting their pastors as showmen choose their lions, for the loudness of their roar, or, like jugglers, for the quantity of false fire they can spit from their lips."

"Ah!" interposed Huff, "there you are, Brother Higgs, on your old heresy. You were always in favor of packing away Christians coolly and comfortably, and despatching them from this world as if the journey to heaven were no more than a pleasant excursion by water, to a country-town, in September. But nothing, in my mind, can supply the Lord's household with purified and holy occupants but fire—fire—fire; the beginning, the middle, and the end of Scripture!"

"Why men, Mr. Huff, are surely something more than mere vessels of potter's clay, whose bad qualities are to be burnt out by the flame."

"Never mind, come in, come in, and your scruples will melt the moment Parson Huckins opens his mouth," said Huff; and at that moment they were ushered into the same building that had received Mrs. Furbelowe and her companion.

The next scene disclosed the parlor of Parson Huckins's dwelling, with the parson, the two deacons, Mrs. Furbelowe, of the Pottawatamy Association, and Mr. Higgins assembled therein.

"Well, how stands our case?" said Mr. Huff.

"All as I told you," answered Huckins.

"Our brother Higgs's condition is desperate—is it?" asked Huff, with a sweet sardonical smile.

"What's that you say of me?" roared Higgs. "Pray what is it, Mr. Huckins?"

"I'd rather not," answered the parson, "I have too much regard for your feelings."

"Out with it, sir, if you please," again cried Higgs; "I must know what matter concerns me, that you and Mr. Huff are so secret with. Will you be so good as to inform me?"

"If you will know, then," answered Huckins,

prefacing his remarks with a long-drawn and meek expression of countenance, "it is my unpleasant duty to inform you, that it is your inevitable destiny to go to hell!"

"To go where?" exclaimed Higgs, in an incipient rage.

"Be not agitated, my good sir!" said the parson soothingly, "I merely said to hell. Be calm—for my sake—be calm. I regret it—I sincerely regret it, and wish to alleviate your misfortune as much as possible. Is there anything I can do for you in a secular sense: are you in want of meat? clothing? coal? I truly commiserate with you, my fellow-mortal!"

"No more of this, if you please," cried Higgs; "I will look at your certificates."

"Here, sir, is one—which must satisfy you fully," said the parson, and he handed him Morfit's document, with which Higgs immediately busied himself.

Mrs. Furbelow took advantage of the pause to gain her feet, and advanced within a yard of the parson, with a very solemn smile on her countenance, and the basket on her left arm; she there stopped short, and began to hold forth. "Sir," said she, "the 'Pottawatomy Association' highly appreciating your numerous Christian virtues—"

"How is this," broke out Higgs, remorselessly cutting short the proffered harangue. "This affidavit is sworn to by my own shoemaker!"

At that moment, and before the parson could reply to this pertinent query, Morfit himself entered with a little grim man with a staff.

"Ah!" cried the little grim man, the instant his eye fell upon the reverend gentleman, "Ah, my good old friend!—how are you, Peter—how

are you?" he continued, grasping the parson's reluctant hand, and wringing it with a hard gripe.

"Gentlemen," he added, seizing Huckins by the collar, and turning to the company, "allow me to introduce you to my worthy friend—Peter Williams—the notorious incendiary!"

"Peter Williams!" gasped Huff. "Fire and flames!"

"A house-burner!" said Higgs. "I thought as much from the combustible character of his sermons!"

"Take me home!" shouted Mrs. Furbelow, "I'm fainting, I shan't survive this long! it's too much for my constitution!" And she let fall the basket, from which the Pottawatomy medal rolled upon the floor. Wiggle availed himself of the confusion to slip from the room, with a most voluminous and expressive grin on his queer features.

"As Higgs, my senior partner, says—" proceeded Higgs.

"Come," said the officer, interrupting him, "come, Peter, you must go to prison. You'll die yet like an old horse at the rack, with your head through a halter."

"If I do," cried the parson, "I'll be—" He struck his hand forcibly upon the desk frame, to give emphasis to his asseveration: the shock awakened him. The whole scene had vanished, and instead of the pit audience, his eyes rested upon the up-turned faces of two or three humble Christians on the front benches of the chapel, gazing upon him with dilating eyes. He convulsively grasped his hat, rushed madly up the middle aisle, out of the building—and, like all heroes of this humbler kind of romance, has never been seen or heard of since.

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BEHEMOTH:

A LEGEND

OF

THE MOUND-BUILDERS.

THE END OF THE WORLD

A. C. C. C.

THE END OF THE WORLD



# BEHEMOTH.

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## PREFACE.

It was the main design of the author in the following work, to make the gigantic relics which are found scattered throughout this continent, subservient to the purposes of imagination. He has, therefore, dared to evoke a Mighty Creature from the earth, and striven to endow it with life and motion. Coeval with this, the great race that preceded the red men as the possessors of our continent, have been called into being. With whatever success the author may have accomplished this portion of his task, the venerable race which struggled and endured in these fair fields, ere they became our home and dwelling place, must be allowed to awaken our feelings and share our generous regards. In describing the Mound-builders, no effort has been made to paint their costume, their modes of life, or their system of government. They are presented to the reader almost exclusively under a single aspect, and under the influence of a single emotion. It matters not to us whether they dwelt under a monarchical or popular form of polity; whether king or council ruled their realms; nor, in fine, what was their exact outward condition. It is enough for us to know, and enough for our humanity to inquire, that they existed, toiled, felt, and suffered; that to them fell, in these pleasant regions, their portion of the common heritage of our race, and that around those ancient hearth-stones, washed to light on the banks of the far-western rivers, once gossiped and enjoyed life, a nation that has utterly faded away. We are moved deeply in looking upon their mortuary remains—those disinterred and stately skeletons—for we know that they once were men, and moved among men with hearts full of human impulses, and heads warm with mortal schemes and fancies. Of this, history could make us no surer. Over the earth where they repose, purple flowers spring up, and with the brilliancy of their hues, and the sweetness of their breath, give a splendor and fragrance to the air. This touches him as deeply, the author must confess, and seems to his untravelled eyes as beautiful as anything he can read of Athens, of cloudless Italy, or the sunny France. Humanity and nature are all with which the heart wishes to deal, and we have them here in their naked outlines and grandeur. There is enough here for author and reader, if they be of strong minds and true hearts. A green forest or a swelling mound is to them as glorious as a Grecian temple; and they may be so simple as to be well nigh as much affected by the sight of a proud old oak in decay near at home, as by the story of a baronial castle tottering to its fall, three thousand miles off.

The author is aware of the difficulty and magnitude of his undertaking. He knows as well as any one can know, the obstacles to vanquish and remove; and he also knows the obstacles that will

not be vanquished nor removed. Notwithstanding all this, he feels assured, if he has contended in any degree successfully with the greatness and majesty of the subject, he will have accomplished some slight service for the literature of his country, and something, he ventures to hope, for his own good name.

NEW YORK, *January*, 1839.

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## PART I.

UPON the summit of a mountain which beetled in the remote west over the dwellings and defences of a race long since vanished, stood, at the close of a midsummer's day, a gigantic shape whose vastness darkened the whole vale beneath. The sunset purpled the mountain-top, and crimsoned with its deep, gorgeous tints the broad occident; and as the huge figure leaned against it, it seemed like a mighty image cut from the solid peak itself, and framed against the sky. Below, in a thousand groups were gathered, in their usual evening worship, a strange people, who have left upon hills and prairies so many monuments of their power, and who yet, by some mighty accident, have taken the trumpet out of the hand of Fame, and closed for ever, as regards their historical and domestic character, the busy lips of tradition. Still we can gather vaguely, that the Mound-builders accomplished a career in the west, corresponding, though less severe and imposing, with that which the Greeks and Romans accomplished, in what is styled by courtesy the old world. The hour has been when our own west was thronged with empires. Over that archipelago of nations the Dead sea of time has swept obliviously, and subsiding, has left their graves only the greener for a new people in this after age to build their homes thereon. But at the present time, living thousands and ten thousands of the ancient people were paying homage to their deity; and as they turned their eyes together to bid their customary solemn adieu to the departing sun, they beheld the huge shape blotting it from sight. The first feeling which sprang in their bosoms as they looked upon the vision was, that this was some monstrous prodigy, exhibited by the powers of the air or the powers of darkness, to astonish and awe them.

But as they gazed, they soon learned that it had a fixed and symmetrical form, and possessed the faculty of life.

When they discovered that the huge apparition was animate indeed, a new terror sprang up in their soul. They gathered about their mounds, their places of worship, and on the plain, in various and fearful groups.

In one spot were collected a company of priests and sages, the learned and prophetic of the race, who with straining eyes watched the mighty spectre; and to gain a clearer conception of its proportions, scanned its broad and far-cast shadow, and marked the altitude of the sun. Each one searched his thoughts for some knowledge applicable to the sudden and vast appearance.

Not far from these was drawn together a group of women, who still retained their devotional posture and aspect, but yet casting side-long and timid glances toward each other's countenances, as if hoping to discover there an interpretation of the spectacle. Children clung to their garments, and looking up piteously, seemed to ask "if that was not the God whom they were taught to fear and worship?" Each moment the awe increased and spread; from lip to lip the story ran across the plain and through the walled villages, until the spectre embraced in its fearful dominion a circuit of many leagues.

Each moment conjecture grew more rife and question more anxious and frequent.

In the opinion of many of the wisest—for even from their souls superstitious misgivings were not wholly banished—the apparition which crowned the mountain was the deity of the nation, who had chosen to assume this form as the most expressive of infinite power and terrific majesty.

Other nobler spirits, and who drew their knowledge rather from the intellect than the feelings, believed it was the reappearance of a great brute, which, by its singular strength, in an age long past and dimly remembered, had wasted the fields of their fathers and made desolate their ancient dwellings.

A tradition still lingered among them, that of that giant race, which had been swept from the earth by some fearful catastrophe, one still lived and might, from a remote and obscure lair, once more come forth, to shake the hills with his trampling, and with the shadow of his coming, darken the households of nations.

In the more thoughtful minds of these theorists, the vivid and traditionary descriptions of the mighty herd of brutes which had once tyrannized over the earth, had left an impression deep, abiding, and darkly colored. The memories of their progenitors had handed them down as a Titanic tribe of beings, who in their day excited a terror which kindled human fear, and with it, the best growth of fear, human ingenuity. They remembered that in that distant age, as the history ran, a new and majestic race of heroes, moulded of nature's noblest clay, had

sprung into life, to battle with and finally vanquish these brute oppressors of their country.

Day faded fast. Its last streaks died away in the west, and yet the solemn shape stood there in its vast, unmoving stillness. And still the people retained their postures of wonder and fear, while in hushed voices they spoke of the occupant of the mountain. Gray, cold twilight at length cast its mantle upon the vision, and they scattered in anxious parties toward their homes. But with them they bore the image of the huge visitant. They could not shake it from them. A general and deep awe had fallen on the multitude; and even when they sought their slumbers, that giant shape passed before their sealed lids in a thousand forms, assuming as many attitudes of assault and defence; for from the first, by a strange instinct, they had looked upon it as their foe. To watch its movements, for it could be yet seen, in the clear distinctness of its immense stature, calm, majestic, silent; to sound the alarm; if need be to meet it face to face, should it descend from its pinnacle, the chieftains of the Mound-builders thought fit to station armed sentries at various corners of the streets and highways of their towns and cities, on the walls of their fortresses, and, as a more commanding position, on the summit of their mounds, and in the square stone observatories which crowned a portion of them.

The relics of the fortresses and observatories that night manned by the sentinels of that peculiar people, still stand and moulder on the soil of the far west. They are constructed on principles of military science now lost or inapplicable.

But, whatever the code of tactics on which they were fashioned, we can not but admire, in the midst of our conjectures, their peculiar symmetry, their number, and their duration. Parallel with the foundations of Rome these walls went up, far back in the calendar of time, and time-defying, they seem destined to pass down, as far from the present into a misty and pregnant future, as the actual history of a populous and mighty race. Like the lost decades of the writer, some passages are wanting to their completeness, but in what stands we may read the power, the strength, the decay, and the downfall of our own American ancients. They were men of war and those ramparts first built against a human enemy were now occupied to keep at bay a new and untried foe. From time to time, along the line of guardmen went the watchword; the sentries of different posts occasionally whispering to each other that the apparition was still visible on the mountain. Not a few, overwearied with their fears, slumbered.

The middle watch of the night had come. The air was dark and still. Not a breath nor voice broke the universal quiet: when, clear and sharp, there fell upon the ears of the sleeping populace, a sound like the crash of sudden thunder. The earth shook as if trodden by

heavy footsteps, and through the air came a noise like the rushing of some mighty bulk in violence and haste. Ponderous hoofs trampled the earth and drew nigh. It was he—the traditional brute—Behemoth—and before his irresistible force fell whatever strove to gainsay his advance. The whole region trembled as when a vast body of waters bursts its way and rolls over the earth, ocean-like, wave shouting to wave, and all crowding onward with thunderous tumult. In vain was the solid breast-work; the piled wall was in vain; in vain the armed and watchful sentry. Like some stupendous engine of war, he bore down on them, rendering human strength a mockery and human defences worse than useless, for as wall, bastion and tower fell, they redoubled death and ruin on their builders. With a speed of which no common celerity can give us a conception he swept through the towns and villages, the tilled fields and pleasure gardens of the Mound-builders—desolating and desolate—none daring to stand before his feet thus dreadfully advanced.

The trepidation of the day grew a hundred-fold; from the dark, dim light which the stars forced through drifting and solid clouds, they could but guess vaguely at his bulk, yet out of their fears and the darkness they wrought an awful image of vastness and strength. Night banded with the monster, and terror walked in their train.

The morning dawned, and its light fell upon the face of an early-wakened and fear-stricken people. On every countenance was graven the clear and visible imprint of terror; but the expression was by no means that of ordinary alarm, such as is engendered by siege, or battle, or death; nor did it stamp the countenance with the characters of a daily and familiar fear.

A dread which changed the whole aspect, such as distorts the features and takes from them their old, household look, was upon all. In the consternation and imbecility of the moment messengers were speeded forth and hurried to and fro through the many villages of the Mound-builders bearing tidings to which as answer, they received—the same tidings in return! The visitation had been universal; in each one of their five thousand villages were left like marks of brute ravage and strength!

Behemoth had been with them all; and his large footsteps were traced wide over the plain until they broke off abruptly at its extreme bounds, and wheeled heavily into the mountains. When their dismay had subsided from its first flood-tide, they began to compare observations and consult with each other. The memories of most were bewildered in endeavoring to recall the occurrences of the past night; but from what with their confused faculties, they could grasp, they were well assured that the whole circuit of desolation had been accomplished within the passage of a single hour. And now the time was come for them to look forth and measure that desolation—to what

side shall they first turn? Everywhere is some monument of that irresistible force. In one brief hour he has overthrown what Time, with his centuries, could not touch. There at the track of his first foot-prints is a crushed wall—driven through by some powerful, and to them as yet unknown, weapon of strength, which has left its dents upon the shattered fragments. Massive portions of it have fallen to powder beneath his weight. Across the path which he seems to have chosen out to stalk in rude triumph, through the very heart of their dwellings, lies a dead guardsman whom his might must have first dashed to the earth by some other un conjectured instrument of power, and then trampled upon, for at every pore the blood issues in torrents. Against a dwelling, pinned to its wall, is the corpse of a second sentinel which seems to have been hurled with scorn by the brute invader into its present abiding-place. On the threshold of her own home lies a mother with her child closely clinging to her neck, its little lips pressed to its parents—both smitten into death by a single blow.

Look forth from this narrow scene and read the map of a broader ruin—the traces of a more fearful mastery! Yonder mound, consecrated by the entombed dust of a generation of sages and heroes is embowelled, and its holy ashes laid open to the vulgar air and the strumpet wind. And yonder gardens, once the resort of blooming beauty and gentle childhood—its walls strew the ground and its flowers, broken and withered, are sunken by the massy weight which has spoiled them, deep into the earth. And lo! that trodden and miry field, shut in by the standing fragments of two oblong walls—yesterday, it was a fair greensward where strength wrestled kindly with strength and age looked on approvingly. In another quarter behold a tall tower of stone is cast down before the same incomprehensible might! The enclosure which surrounded and guarded it is battered to the earth, and about it is collected at this morning hour not a few of the chiefs of the Mound-builders, deeply lamenting the overthrow of so scientific and regular a muniment. Sad words pass from each to each and they look despondingly into each other's faces, and find no hope, but rather a triumphant despair. From among the group which hung thus powerless and complaining over the shattered battlement boldly stood forth Bokulla, the most fearless and energetic chieftain of the nation—Bokulla—a man of singular and prompt courage, greatly earnest and energetic in purpose: yet calm and self-involved.

In every enterprise keeping himself aloof until the resources of all others were exhausted, and then, when every eye was turned toward him as the last sustainer of hope, springing with alacrity to the front, prepared to match the emergency with some new and vigorous suggestion. Bokulla was a thinker no less than a soldier; not artificially framed by filling his mind with learned apothegms and pithy instances, but with a philosophy, the growth of a

meditative spirit that brooded over all things and created wisdom from most. He possessed, nevertheless, a thoroughly martial and energetic mind, and found in every path of life, an accessory to strengthen and adorn that character. Unlike, however, the majority of professed militants, he rarely exhibited the gay buoyancy which is so generally considered in them an essential. On the contrary, even in the maddest onset and in the high flush of triumph, his brow was saddened, oftentimes with a passing cloud of gloom; the mark which distinguishes too often those who are born to be the leaders and benefactors of their race.

The mind of Bokulla partook of another peculiarity, in common with many men of masterly genius. Defeated, or foiled in any attempt, his heart plunged, awhile, in the profoundest and most torturing despair—but only for the instant—and then, reassuming its lofty strength, an eagle, unchained, or slipped from its darkened cage, he rose into the clear, broad sunshine of a worthier condition.

Such was Bokulla; and, when those grouped around him had each offered his several remark, and they had mutually mourned over the present desolation, he stood forth from their midst and said, "Men! the day is spent with repining, and the night comes, and with it, perchance, our dread enemy. Let us rebuild the wall, and show, at least, that we can oppose our *old* strength to his inroads. He has but the instinct of a brute, we have the reason of men. Let him not," he cried, "let him not find us, for our souls' sake, let him not find us greater cravens than yesternight!"

With these words, and with the consent of the chieftains who stood about him, he ordered the rebuilding of the rampart, and the erection of an inner one to flank it. Before the passages, which had been previously left free of egress and ingress, he directed the construction of short and solid walls, which should suffice to arrest access, if made in full front, leaving, however, side-passages between the extremities of the main and those of the newly-erected ramparts. Under the authoritative and cheering voice of Bokulla, the building-tool and the trenching-iron ply busily. Parties of laborers hurry from quarter to quarter of the work, and something like a manly and worthy spirit seems again to fire their bosoms and lighten their toil. While some gather together the broken portions of earth, and remould them to their purpose, others bring from the distance new supplies, and still others quarry and shape the stone to crown their summits. Under his quick and commanding eye, the tower of observation goes up and its defences are restored.

But, while Bokulla and his aids build up the strong wall to guard the living, is there no duty and service due to the dead? There is; and, under other guidance, the manly forms which were laid in the recent encounter, are stretched for their last repose.

Devoted hands compose their discolored limbs, and bathe them with embalming drugs, while their kindred, those nearest and dearest in life, collect—to accompany them in this, their last journey—whatever can consecrate or dignify their sepulture. Those who have fallen, fell in the defence of the nation, and are, therefore, worthy of the nation's honors. Let them be buried, then, as becomes heroes of the Mound-builders—bearing away with them, into the unknown land, tokens of merit and badges of high desert. Their bodies are swathed in fine raiment; at their right hand are placed the weapons of war, grasping which they fell; at their sides are arrayed mirrors of glass or metal (according to their rank) in which they were wont to look for the reflection of their own martial features, when set for the stern service of war. At their heads are disposed the helmets which covered them in the day of battle, and on their now pulseless breasts lie polished pieces of copper, in the form of the cross.

Can it be that those antique warriors were Christian men?—that, among them, they thus cherished trophies of the crucifixion, and upheld the ark of that reverend creed?—or, at least, some stray fragments of the holy structure, obscurely delivered over to them by paternal or patriarchal hands? I know not; but this is the language which their discovered relics speak to us of the present generation.

Slowly, from each dead hero's dwelling, winds forth the solemn procession, with its weeping-troop and its religious mourners. Gathering at a central spot, they unite into one body, and, thus collected, take their way toward the funeral-mounds. Attendants send forth, from marble instruments, shaped like crescents and highly polished, a slow and mournful music. Beside the bier of each fallen soldier, walk his wife and children, while, at its head, marches solemnly the priest, who, in life, was his spiritual father.

Winding through the villages, over the meadows, and along the stream-side, they reach the bank, right opposite the mounds in which the dead are to find their final slumber. Descending into the limpid and shallow stream, the bearers gently dip each corpse beneath the waters, thus purifying it, by a natural sort of baptism, from every earthly grossness, and then they resume their way—all following, with bared ankles, through the placid rivulet. At length they reach the sacred mound. At its side, toward the east, the earth is removed, and, turning their faces to the sun, while the marble breathes forth a higher strain, the bearers of the dead enter the hollowed mound.

As they enter, the throng chant together a simple ballad, reciting the virtues and the valor of the departed, and, at its close, recommending them to the Giver of life and the God of the seasons. The bier-bearers place the mortal remains of the heroes whom they have borne, within the cavity, upon the earth, with their

faces upward, their feet pointing to the northeast (perhaps the home of their progenitors) and their heads toward the more genial southwest.

Thus were the common-soldiers, among those who had fallen, buried; but one of that number—he who had been captain of the guard, and a man of note among the people, received separate and more especial rites.

His remains were borne apart, to a distinct mound, and there, when they were laid out with the honors of a chief who had lost his life in battle, martial music, breathing from the instruments, and the whole multitude joining in a chant, commemorative (like those recited over the common soldier) of his valor and character, they proceeded to burn his body and gather his ashes into their separate tomb. They then closed the mouths of all the mounds, and, when the priests had offered a prayer for the peaceful repose of their dust, the multitude turned toward their homes.

All was hushed and silent save the gentle tread of the homeward-tending people. The mourning relatives of the dead had lulled into a temporary calm their troublous feelings, and wept with composure. The spirit of peace was over all. Suddenly a shrill voice was heard to cry, "He comes! he comes!" It proceeded from a child, who, unobserved, had climbed to the upper window of one of the stone observatories. The multitude were arrested by the voice, and, turning to the quarter from which it issued, saw the finger of the alarmist pointing to a body of woods which lay a short distance west from the path which they were taking to their homes. As at the bidding of a god, the whole people, with one accord, swerved round and gazed toward the forest, and there they beheld—Behemoth. Fixed in an attitude of astonishment and dread, they stood gazing—and still gazing upon the spectacle—a boundless and motionless gallery of faces. It was near the sunset. Overhead, in its level light, a grey bald eagle, just flown from its neighboring eyry, hung poised in wonder, as if turned to stone by the novel sight of so vast a creature. In its motionless suspension, it seemed as if sculptured from the air, while its wings were gilded, like some remains of the old statuary, by the golden touch of the sun.

Visible above the woods, moving heavily through the sea of green leaves, like leviathan in the deep, appeared the dark and prodigious form of the Mastodon; an awful ridge rolling like a billow, along the tops of the pine and cedar which grew beneath him. The boundless bulk moved through the trembling verdure, like an island which, in some convulsion of nature, shifts itself along the surface of the sea. The forest shook as he advanced, while its scared and barbarous denizens, the prairie wolf, the gopher, and the panther, skulked silently away.

As yet his whole mighty frame was not visible. Even amid the trepidation and fear of the Mound-builders a curiosity sprang up to behold

the sum of his vast proportions: to see at once before them and near at hand the actual dimensions of that shape whose shadowy outlines had, when first seen, wrought in them effects so boundless and disastrous.

Occasionally as the Mastodon glided along, a green tree-top wavered for a moment in the wind, leaned forward into the air—and fell to the earth as if pushed from its hold by the chance-exerted strength of the great brute. Again, they heard a crash, and a giant oak which had just now lorded it over its fellows was snapped from its stem and cast far forth over the tops of the forest. His very breath stirred the leaves till they trembled, and every step of his march denoted, by some natural appearance, the possession of monstrous and fearful power.

After stalking through a large tract of woodland without allowing any greater portion of his bulk to become apparent, he wheeled through the forest and descending into a wooded valley disappeared, each step reverberating along the earth with a deep and hollow sound. It was a long time ere the Mound-builders resumed their old, homeward progress, and when they did it was with alarmed and cheerless spirits. The awe of the great shadow was upon them. Now more than ever they felt the folly of gain-saying or attempting to withstand a power which shrouded itself in a form so vast and inaccessible.

From that day forth a gloom settled upon the minds of the Mound-builders—deep, rayless and full of fearful omens; for though personal energy may rescue individuals from that desperate condition, it is a hopeless and a dreadful thing when nations become the victims of despair. All the mighty wheels of life are stopped; all the channels through which the soul of the people once coursed are now closed, and, in most cases, closed for ever. The arteries through which the life-blood gushed are deadened, and the warm current is arrested as if the winter had descended upon it in its very spring-tide. The Mound-builders were now fallen into that sad estate. Neither the spirit-stirring voice of Bokulla, nor the trump of war, nor the memory of their fathers' fields or their fathers' valor, could awaken them to a sense of what was due to their manhood or their duty. The Mastodon seemed resolved to preserve the spell by an almost perpetual presence. Day after day in the same gray twilight did Behemoth cast his shadow from the summit of some near elevation; and midnight after midnight, at the same cold and sullen hour, did he descend and force his huge bulk through the villages of the Mound-builders: breaking their walls in pieces, rending their dwellings, disclosing their mounds and despoiling their pleasure gardens from end to end. He had become the spectral visitant of the nation;—the monstrous and inexorable tyrant who, apparently gliding from the land of shadows, presented himself eternally to them,

the destroyer of their race. He seemed, in these terrible incursions, to be fired with a mighty revenge for some unforgiven injury inflicted on his dead and extinct tribe by the human family. In the calm and solemn quiet of night, when fretted labor sought repose and anxious thought craved slumber, he burst down from the mountains like thunder and bade them—Awaken! awaken!

The internal and external influence of an harassment like this could not be otherwise than large and disastrous. First came the dire change in the mind itself: when this terrible shadow glided among its quiet emotions, its familiar habits, and its household and national thoughts. All objects that had hitherto occupied a place in the mind of the people now assumed a new color and complexion as this portent fell upon them, in the same manner as everything in nature catches a portion of the gloom of twilight when it suddenly approaches. No angle of the wide realm of the Mound-builders escaped from the darkness of fear, and everywhere the fountains of social life became stagnant and ceased to issue in healthy currents, like streams that are silent and still when light has departed from their surface.

The voice of joy died away into a timid and feeble smiling; proud and stately ambition fell humbled to the earth, and love and beauty trembled and fled before the gloomy shadow of the general adversary. Men shunned each other as if from a consciousness of their abasement, and skulked away from the face of day, unwilling that the heavens should look in upon their desolation and shame.

Some abandoned their homes and took refuge in cliffs and inaccessible precipices, preferring poverty and exposure to wind and tempest and hostile weather, rather than encounter with a foe so dreadful and triumphant. The great mass, however, lingered in their customary dwellings; but so thoroughly was every motive to action numbed and paralyzed, they neglected to repair the roof that had fallen, the beam that had decayed, or the foundation that had yielded to the summer's rain, and innumerable buildings, throughout the whole realm, tumbled into ruin, and many that stood on the borders of rivers, undermined by the motion of their currents, tottered and fell into the stream, while their terror-stricken inmates, in many cases, perished without a struggle.

The ordinary occupations and duties of life were performed with feeble hands and vague thoughts, or entirely deserted.

This mighty and puissant nation, whose strength was that of a giant, and whose glory rivalled the sun, was stricken by terror into a feeble and child-like old age. All its proportions were diminished; its heart was shrunk, and it dragged on a slothful and decrepid existence amid the cold and monumental ruins of what had once been its beautiful domain, and its house of honor and joy. That salient and almost motiveless energy which drives a nation

on through toils, battles, and discomfitures, to prosperity and triumph; that hazardous and all-adventurous daring which pushes doubt aside, and which, while it questions nothing, strives at everything, was utterly departed.

From the silence and quiet of his studied retirement, Bokulla beheld the shadow as it slowly and fearfully crossed the national mind. From the first he saw the change which was coming over it, and knew that human wisdom was too weak to arrest or avert it, unless the great first cause could be removed. And yet, while others yielded thus submissively to a meek despair, he, keeping himself invisible to the general eye, tasked his bold and liberal mind for some remedy for the evil. In the calm and dead quiet of his private chamber he sat, from day to day, brooding over plans and enterprises whereby to rescue the nation.

Bokulla entertained a deep-founded confidence in the human character. Himself equipped with an indomitable will, and faculties stout and resolute as iron, he was assured that by similar qualities the nation was to be redeemed from thralldom. Amid a thousand changes of nature, man had endured; mountains had been cleft asunder; seas had leaped upon continents, and marched triumphantly over every barrier and obstacle; great orbs had been extinguished, like tapers of an evening, in the skies, yet man stood, steadfast amid the shock and the mutation. Along the bleak coasts of inhospitable time, he had voyaged in a secure and upright vessel; on this ridge of earth he still stood, while the visible universe passed through changes of season, through increase or diminution of splendors, and through worlds created or worlds destroyed.

Was man, who thus outlasted seas, and stars, and mountains, to be crushed at last by mere brutal enginery and corporal strength?

Reflections like these wrought the mind of Bokulla to a condition of fearless and manly daring, and he brought his whole soul to the labor of discovering or contriving the means of triumph or resistance. It may well be supposed that, tower as his thought might, it strove in vain to overtop the stature or master the bulk of the Mastodon; what were fosses, and bastions, and battlements, to him that moved like a mountain against opposition? No wall could shut him out; seas might interpose in vain to cut off his fearful pursuit of a fugitive people. Resting or in motion, that terrible and far-reaching strength would overtake them, and accomplish its purposes of desolation and ruin.

With this stupendous and inevitable image the whole might of Bokulla's soul wrestled for a long time. An untiring invention, that kept steadily on the wing, started suggestion on suggestion, but all unequal to the mighty necessity of the occasion. He gathered facts on which to build the fabric of opposition, huge enough to countervail a superhuman force, but they tottered and fell to the earth before the ideal presence of Behemoth. He surveyed mountains, and, in imagination, linked them together, with



wide arches and empyreal bridges, and compassed the people round about with rock-built circumvallations and ramparts of insurmountable altitude and strength. But it would have required ages to complete the defences, suggested by a swift imagination, which would have been equal to their object; and others, which great labor might have more readily erected, would have been swept away in a single night by the barbaric invader.

When this conclusion forced itself upon him, Bokulla felt, for a moment, the pangs of a hopeless and overwhelming despair. A midnight darkness came over his mind, and it was, for a time, as if the sun and the heavens were obliterated from his view, and as if he were doomed to travel, henceforth, a gloomy turnpike, where all was sorrow, and wailing, and terror without end. But the light gradually broke in upon his soul, and his palsied faculties began to awaken and cast off the slumber and the delusion. His reflections, it is true, had taught him that his countrymen could act in defence against their vast oppressor with but frail chance of success. He was satisfied that a weight and bulk as monstrous as that of Behemoth would burst their way, by their mere impetuous motion, through any barrier or redoubt they might erect. There was another thought, however, worthy of all consideration—could not the Mound-builders, a naturally adventurous and valiant people, act on the offensive? Abandoning passive and barbarous suffering, was not battle to be waged, and waged with hope against the despoiler? This question Bokulla had put anxiously to himself, and he watched, with an eager eye, for some favorable phase of the national feeling, ere he addressed it to the people.

From one crisis of fear to another, the Mound-builders passed rapidly, and, as the shades of night thicken one upon the other, each aspect of their condition was gloomier than the former. At length, as darkness deepened and strengthened itself, light began to dawn in the opposite quarter. Hardened by custom, and familiar, in a measure, with the object of their dread, they now ventured to lift their pale, white countenances, and gaze with some steadiness of vision upon the foe.

Naturally of a noble character and constitution, the Mound-builders needed only that the original elements of their temper should be stirred by some powerful conviction to excite them to action. A new spirit, or rather the ghost of the old and exiled one, had returned to the nation, and they now saw before them, unless they resumed their manhood and generously exerted strength and council, ages of desolation and fear for themselves and their children. Were they men, and should no hazard be dared, no toil or peril endured, to break the massive despotism that held them to the earth? Were they the possessors of a land of sublime and wonderful aspects, the dwellers amid interminable woods and lakes of living water, and were no glorious nor resolute energies matured by

these, capable to cope with that which was mighty and awful?

At this fortunate stage of feeling Bokulla appeared. He clothed the thoughts of the people in an eloquence of his own. He painted the portrait of their past condition in life-like and startling colors. He told them that from the apparent size and solidity of the Mastodon, and the uniform analogy of nature, he might endure for centuries, yea, even beyond the duration of mankind itself, unless his endless desolation could be arrested. If they suffered now under his irresistible sway, they might suffer for a thousand years to come. That vast frame, he feared, decay could not touch. And in a stature so tremendous must reside an energy and stubbornness of purpose, endurable and unchanging.

Next, addressing them from the summit of a mound, around which many of the people were grouped in their old worship (some faint image of which they had kept up through all their terror) he appealed to them by the sacred and inviolate ashes that rested underneath his feet. If old warriors and generous champions, never dishonored, could awaken from the slumbers of death, and breathe again the pure air of that glorious clime, what voice of denunciation or anger would they utter!

"Are these men, that creep along the earth like the pale shadows of autumn, Mound-builders and children of our loins? What hath affrighted them? Look to the mountains, and lo! an inferior creature, one of the servants and hirelings of man, hath the mastery. Arouse! arouse our sons! Place in our old, death-withered hands the swords we once wielded—crown us with our familiar helms, and we will wage the battle for you. Victory to the builders of the mounds! victory to the lords and masters of the earth!"

The national pulse beat true again, and Bokulla hastened from village to village, quickening and firing it. Everywhere the hour of renovation seemed to have come. Everywhere ascending their high places, he appealed to them by memories to which they could not but hearken. Everywhere an immense populace gathered about him and listened to his words, as if they were the inspired language of hope. And when their souls were fired, as it were, under the fervent heat of his eloquence, he skilfully moulded them to his own plan and purpose. He recounted to them the mode, the time and course he thought fit for them to adopt in seeking battle with Behemoth.

After consultation with their chieftains, the levy expected and demanded of each was soon settled.

They were to venture forth with an army (easily collected in that populous nation) of one hundred thousand strong. Bokulla was to be the leader-in-chief. Approved men were to be his counsel and aids. The day of setting forth on the great campaign was fixed; not far distant. In the meantime, all diligence and labor were to be employed in disciplining, equipping, and

inspiring the troops: in burnishing and framing the necessary armor, and in constructing certain new engines of war, which Bokulla had invented, and which might be of use in the encounter with the terrible foe.

Every village, now presented a picture of busy preparation and warlike bustle. The forges, whose fires had smouldered in long disuse, were again rekindled, and their anvils rang with the noise of a thousand hammers rivalling each other in the skill with which they moulded the metals into heroic shapes. While one wrought out with ready dexterity the breast-plate, with its large, circular bosses of silver, another, with equal, but less costly felicity, framed the brazen hatchet, and the steel arrow-head. In every workshop there were employed artisans in sufficient number to not only begin with the rude ore and shape it into form, but also to carry it through every stage of labor—tipping it with silver—burnishing—ornamenting—completing them,—affixing leathern handles to the bosses by which to grasp and hold the shield, and arranging them in due order for inspection by the appointed officers.

At another and higher class of laboratories they were employed in framing and fashioning weapons for chieftains and warriors of note; swords of tempered steel and scabbards of silver, capped with points of other and less penetrable material: and helmets of copper and shields, with ornamental and heraldic devices. Some busied themselves in furnishing large shields of brass, which they polished with care until they glittered again—while still farther on, they wrought out large bows of steel, from which to speed the barbed arrows prepared by their fellow-workmen. Farther up, near the mountain-side, there lay a range of shops, in which a thousand operatives constructed military wagons and other vehicles for the expedition; for they knew not how far it might extend, nor through what variety of hill and dale.

To the right of these were gathered artisans under the immediate superintendence of the commander-in-chief, who labored at certain vast and new engines of battle, more especially contrived for conflict with the vast brute. These were large and ponderous wooden structures, something like the towers known in Roman warfare, but, as the strength and stature of the foe required, of far greater height and stiffness.

They were to be planted on heavy wheels and of great circumference—placed far apart, so as to furnish for the whole edifice a broad and immovable base. On the outer side, they were armed with every sort of sharp-edged weapon, cutlass, falchion, and spearhead, so as to be, if possible, unassailable by Behemoth. Internally, they were furnished with great store of vast bows and poisoned shafts, with which, if such thing might be, to pierce him in some vulnerable point, or at least to gall him sorely and drive him at a distance. Besides these, there were suspended in copious abundance, divers

ingenious implements, each contrived for some emergency of battle, to strike, to ward, to wound, and to destroy.

Others were building, taller and stronger, at the summits of which were suspended great masses of metal and ponderous hammers, tons in weight, with which to wage a dreadful battery against the mighty foe. By some internal machinery, it was so contrived, that these solid weights of metal could be swung to and fro with fearful swiftness and violence, by the application of a small and apparently inadequate power. Another structure, like these, was prepared, from which to cast, by means of capacious instruments, large quantities of molten metals, kept in fusion by mighty furnaces, to be hurled upon the enemy from afar, and to descend upon him in sulphurous and deadly showers, like those which fell on Sodom and Gomorrah of old.

Day and night, night even to its middle watches, were devoted to the construction and fabrication of engines and implements like these; for their minds were now so anchored on this great enterprise, that all other ties were cast loose, and in this alone they embarked every thought and purpose. The hours hitherto given to repose and sleep, were now made vassals to the new adventure.

It was a magnificent spectacle to see a whole nation thus gathered under the dark wing of the midnight, working out battle for their dread adversary. Athwart the solid darkness which pressed upon their dwellings, the gleams of swarthy labor shot long and frequent. Far through the hills echoed the clangor of armorers, and the sharp sounds of multitudinous toil, laboring, each in its kind, toward the redemption of a people.

Grouped thus about their forges, and hurrying from one task to another with rapid and quiet tread, they might have seemed to the eye of imagination, looking down from the neighboring heights, to be employed in infernal labor, and vexing the noon of night with unearthly and Satanic cares.

But over the wide scene there rested a blessing; for Heaven always shines upon the oppressed who nobly yearn and vigorously strive to break their chains. The long and bright hours of day, too, were crowded with their peculiar duties. The gardens and the enclosed plains, again restored to their old symmetry and beauty, were now filled with a soldiery which, under the eye of dexterous leaders, were drilled, deployed, marshalled, and schooled into new manœuvres, before this unknown in the wars of the Mound-builders, and adapted to the character of their unwonted antagonist. They were taught to wheel with novel evolutions, to retreat in less orderly but more evasive movements and marches than of old, and to attack with a wariness and caution hitherto unpractised in their encounters with mortal enemies. Over all the eye of Bokulla glanced, giving system to the orders of the



chieftains, and confidence to the obedience of their legions. Apparently performing duty nowhere, he fulfilled it everywhere, with a calm and masterly skill, which, while it was unobserved by the populace, was an object of admiration to another order of men, who were made the immediate channels of his influence, and who were therefore brought more directly under the spell.

"Upon my soul," cried one of two officers, who stood near the trunk of a withered cedar, which overshadowed a wide and deep sunken well, looking upon one of these novel parades, "upon my soul, Bokulla hath the power and the knowledge of a God. Out of these men, but yesterday dumb and torpid with fear, he has struck the spirit of life, and that with the same ease as my sword-blade strikes from this dull stone at my foot, sparks of fire."

"Who can withstand the giant machines which tower yonder, like mountains, above our dwellings?" cried his companion. "The Spirit of Evil himself, if imbodied in the frame of the Brute, must fall before those whirlwind hammers of brass and tempests of molten copper!"

While he spake, one of the vast oaken structures had been wheeled out, and his ponderous enginery set in motion, and brought to bear upon a crag that projected from the mountain near which it rested. To and fro they swung with fearful force and velocity, at each blow shattering vast masses from the rock, and bringing them headlong down the mountain. At the same time, not far distant, tons of crude ore were cast into the furnaces, affixed to the other towers, and hurled forth upon the prairie in clouds of fire, which, as they fell upon the earth, scathed and withered everything before them.

Although the multitude entertained hearts of favor and hope toward the project of meeting Behemoth in battle, there were a few who doubted its wisdom and foreboded a gloomy result.

"The dinging of those anvils," said an aged man who sat at the sunset in the front of his dwelling, to his spouse (no less stricken in years), who leaned out at the window, "the dinging of yon anvils is to my ears a mere death-dirge. Wherefore are the youth of our land to be led forth on this vain pilgrimage? They are fore-doomed by the hooting of the owl, which has been ceaseless in our woods since first it was planned. The dismal bat and the brown vulture flap their wings over our bright day-marshallings in expectancy of a banquet."

"And as for the chieftain, Bokulla," continued his wife, prolonging the dolorous strain of conversation, "his defeat, if not death, is already doomed in heaven. The star which fell but yesternight luridly athwart his dwelling, foretold that sequel too well. And his spouse, stumbled she not essaying but this morning to cross its threshold and greet the home-return of Bokulla from the distant villages?"

"This army, five score thousand in numbers," reiterated the old man, "will be but as the snow in the whirlwind before the breath of Behemoth. They have forgotten, senseless men! the story of our fathers. They recollect not how in ancient days the fellow of this vast Brute (perchance this living one himself) was met by our hunters in the mountain gorge: that his roar was like thunder near at hand, and his tread like the invasion of waters! that they shrunk before him into the hollows of the rocks as the white cloud scatters before the sun!"

"I pray Heaven the wife of Bokulla be not widowed," echoed his spouse. "The chieftain is a bold man, and submits but poorly to the lording of any, be it man or brute."

"I fear this spirit pricks him on too far in this adventure; I have warned him secretly," concluded the old mound-builder, in a deep and solemn tone of voice; "I have warned him, but he scorns my warning. He will not be stayed in his purpose. I will warn him yet once more, for he dreams not that he goes out to war with one who is a giant in instinct as well as in strength!"

The eventful morning of going forth against the Mastodon came: it was a morning bright with beautiful auspices. The sky overhead glittered with its fresh and airy splendors: no cloud dimmed the world of indescribable blue which hung calm and motionless like heaven itself on high. Occasionally against its clear canvass a passing troop of wild-fowl painted their forms, and vanished; or, a tree-top here and there stood out, pencilled upon it, with its branches and foliage all distinct. The sun rode just over the horizon, and through the innumerable villages of the Mound-builders the martial trumpet sounded the spirit-stirring alarm. At the call, one hundred thousand right-good men of battle seized their arms and marched through the territory of their brethren in solid array.

At the head of the van, drawn in a two-wheeled chariot of wood, studded with iron and ornamented with an eagle at each of its four points, front and rear, and drawn by a single powerful and jet-black bison, came Bokulla himself. He stood erect in the vehicle, while his burnished armor and towering helm flung their splendor far and wide. In his hand he held no rein, but guided the noble beast by his mere intonations of voice.

Behind Bokulla followed a company of men-at-arms, each bearing a long and stalwart club, armed, at its heavier extremity, with a four-edged sword or falchion, to the point of which was affixed a spear-like weapon, stiff and keen. Of these there were one hundred each cased in a mail of elk-skin, which, while it was flexible and yielded to every gesture of the body, was yet a sufficient defence against any ordinary assault. These were expected, beside guarding and sustaining Bokulla, to close with Behemoth, and, taking advantage of the unwieldy motions

of his frame, to wound his legs, or otherwise annoy and disable him. Behind these followed an equal phalanx of spearmen, whose allotted duty it was, with a longer weapon, to gird the brute at a distance, and draw his attention from any quarter to which it might appear directed with too much vigor and chance of danger. In the rear of the company of spearmen marched a strong body of common soldiers, bearing the customary Mound-builders' instruments of war, namely, vast steel bows, six feet or more in length, and quivers filled with corresponding shafts, tipped with poisons, and on their left arms bearing the usual shield of copper, with bosses of silver. In the rear of these heavily rolled on two of those newly-invented machines, which rose like pyramids above the array. These were drawn by scores of yoked bison, and driven forward by private soldiers, who walked at their sides. The earth shook under their lumbering weight. Their bowels were filled with captains and privates, who had charge, each in his station, of their implements of death. Following these, in order, marched a numerous squadron, sustaining, over their sinewy shoulders, heavy axes of steel with edges sharp as death, and handles of immovable oak. Drawn by a thousand beasts of burden, behind these, came innumerable provision and baggage wagons, provided for the emergency of a protracted search for the enemy, and a long delay in vanquishing and destroying him. These were accompanied with troops and officers. Behind these walked countless varieties of battle; soldiers, the very conception of whose armor and weapons is lost in the oblivious and mouldering past. Rearmost came six other towers, bearing their immense hammers and fiery furnaces, with ten thousand troops to guard, to guide them; to select even roads for their progress, and, lastly, to wield their vast forces in the hour of conflict.

Over the whole floated a hundred bright and emblematic pennons, while the sonorous metal kept time to their waving folds as the morning wind dallied them to and fro. It was a glorious thing to see ten times ten thousand, thus equipped and embattled, going forth, on that gay morning, to the war.

Wherever their course lay, it was thronged with the multitude pushing to gain a sight of Bokulla and his compeers, the solid soldiery and the stupendous structures. Every window was filled, every elevation seized on, every housetop covered by spectators straining their vision to gather in every appointment and device, banner and sword, bison, chieftain, and all. Ah! well might their eyes ache to look upon that numerous chivalry! Well might they hang with lingering gaze upon the fair cheeks of that youthful array! Well might their hearts keep time with the onward steps of that glorious host! Happy is it for mortals that they can enjoy the pageant of the present, and have no power to prefigure in it the funeral-procession and the

mournful company into which the future may change it!

As the foot of the last soldier left the territory of the Mound-builders, the drums and trumpets sounded a farewell, and the army, taking the right bank of a rapid stream which ran due west, pursued its march. The ground over which their course lay, was a smooth and pleasant green-sward, the verdure of which was still wet with the dews of the night. Occasionally it rose into a gentle elevation, which, for the first few miles, brought the advancing army once again in sight of the expectant gazers, who still kept their posts upon housetop, tower, and mound. At length, from one of these eminences, they descended into a valley which bore them altogether from the view of the most favorably-stationed looker-out; and yet, even when their banners and tall structures had passed wholly from the sight, gushes of music, fainter and fainter at each note, reached their ears, and reverberated from the neighboring cliffs and hill-sides.

Onward they passed, through the long vale which stretched before them, choosing out the clearest paths, and still keeping their march toward the occident. In selecting this route they were guided by large tracks which appeared at remote strides in the earth, and by frequent signs of devastation—fallen trees and crushed underwood.

Once they came to a river of great width, on the near margin of which, at the water's edge, appeared two large footprints, while on the opposite bank were discovered indentations equally vast but impressed deeper in the soil, as if the monstrous beast had reared on his hindmost feet, and, with supernatural strength and agility, thrown himself across the intervening breadth of waters. As there were no bridges near at hand, they were forced to compass the river by a circuitous route, to regain the tracks which had been espied on the other bank.

After attaining the utter extremity of the vale through which the stream poured its tide, they pursued their chosen way into a thick wood, the path of the Mastodon through which seemed to have been created by sweeping before him, with a flexible power, whatever obstructed his progress. On every side of the huge gap into which the army now entered, lay prostrate trees of greatest magnitude—oak, pine, and sycamore. Some, apparently, had been cast on high, and, descending into the neighboring forest, left their roots naked in the air, unnaturally inverted and exposed. And yet, save in the immediate path of the desolator, nature smiled, unalarmed and innocent in its primeval and virgin beauty. Here and there shone out, in the forest, bright green patches, rising often into gentle slopes, or softening away into vales as gentle. Frequently the upland was crowned with groups of small trees, and the vales were tessellated with sweet wild-

towers. Then they crossed babbling brooks and rivulets, which ran across their march with a melodious murmur, eloquent with reproaches on the warlike task they were at present pursuing. Again, a large stream, which had gathered volume from the neighboring mountains, came rushing down the declivities, and seemed to shout them on to battle.

At times, in the course of this variegated march, they fell upon open spaces where, for a small circuit, no tree was to be seen; rich meadows, the chosen pastures of the wild beings of the prairies, pranked with red and white clover, and fragrant as the rose, in their unowned freshness.

Sometimes they passed through sudden and narrow defiles, overhung by frowning cliffs, and clothed with a dank verdure which seemed to be the growth of a century. One gorge, in particular, of this kind, they encountered, whose beetling rocks in their dark and regular grandeur, looked as if they might have been wrought out by the hands of the old Cyclops or Pelasgians strange. They seemed to be the solemn halls of a great race which had its seat of empire there (beyond even the age of the Mound-builders), and chambered in its tabernacles of everlasting stone. But Nature alone built these halls for herself, and through them, toward the west, she walks at the twilight and morning hour in pomp and majesty. I see her, her skirts purpled with evening, and flowing forth in the fresh breezes of that untainted clime, now pacing those mighty avenues, and recalling, in their awful stillness, the nations which slumber at her feet. Her face brightens like a sun, as she meditates over the empires which have faded from earth into the dust beneath her; she thinks and kindles in knowing and remembering that, while man is mortal and perisheth, she is eternal and thrones with God.

The glittering and long-extended host of the Mound-builders marched on through this cliff-walled passage, and passed next from all glimpse of the sun, into dense and almost impervious woods; impervious but for the way hewn out by the mighty pioneer, in whose tracks they continued to tread. Gloom, with its midnight wings, sat on high and brooded over the boundless thicket.

The very leaves seemed dipped in a deeper hue of green, and the grass was thick and matted underneath, as if, in that desolate region, it clung closer to the earth. Above, stood in their ancient stillness, apparently unvoiced for ages, the tall, sombre trees, while about their trunks venerable ivies and mosses clung desperately, and mounted far up toward their topmost branches. Athwart the solid darkness no wing, save that of a melancholy owl or bat, clove and furnished to the tenebrous realm the sign of life or motion. On the earth no living thing was to be seen, unless, amid the dank grass, an occasional toad or serpent, sitting or coiled on the cold stone. And yet, though life seemed ex-

tinct, or exhibited itself only in reptile and hateful forms, the Mound-builders, as they marched on through the gloomy quiet, in pursuit of their mighty prey, saw, in the dimly discovered foot-marks which they still followed, a token of vast and inexplicable power which deepened the darkness about them, and infused a portion of its weird influence into their souls: and yet, with purpose unshaken, they advanced. Again the blessed sunshine greeted them, and the low mist rolled heavily from their minds—and again their purpose stood out to their inward eye, clear and determinate.

Emerging from the awful woods they came to a broad prairie, across which the large foot-steps were deeply visible. On every side, as far as the eye could reach, the ample plain was desert and unoccupied. The innumerable herds of bison which had once been its tenantry, had now, before the terror of Behemoth, fled away; and the wild wolf, which once lurked amid the rank grass, skulked from a power which seemed to overshadow the earth. Still there was a province of animated nature into which the alarm scarcely ascended: for on high, as in the quiet and fearless hours of earlier times, the brown vulture and the bald eagle flew, silently sailing on, or sending through the air their shrill notes of ecstasy and rapture. The boundlessness of those mighty meadows was in itself calculated to strike an awe through the bosom of the advancing army; before it they lay, a vast table, on which, as on the tables of stone, the fingers of an Omnipotent had written majesty, power, and eternity. Contemplations like these were sufficient in themselves to fill the mind of the armed host with feelings of awe and humility; but when, over the immense prairie, they saw evidences that something had passed which for the moment rivalled Deity; more palpable in its manifestations, nearer in its visible strength, and less merciful in its might; when the tracks about them and the desert solitude which Behemoth had created, became thus clearly apparent, they shrunk within themselves and doubted the wisdom of their present enterprise.

This feeling however reigned but for a moment. More manly and martial thoughts soon took their place, and they pressed on in the path pointed out with alacrity and courage. The verge of the plain, which they had now reached, bordered on a long and high ridge of mountains, which stretched from the margin of the prairie far west. Upon these summits they now advanced. Arrayed in broad and solid columns the army moved on over the mighty causeway, their trumpets filling the air with novel music; while the echo of their martial steps, sounding through the wilderness, affrighted Silence from his ancient throne. Against the clear sky their bright banners flaunted, and high up into the heaven aspired the warlike tower flashing death from every point. The gleam of ten thousand swords

streamed from those broad heights far into the depths of air—above, around, below—lighting the solitude like new-risen morning-stars.

The pride of war now truly kindled their breasts—fear skulked aside from their heroic way, and Death, could he have come forth a personal being, on those clear summits, as their pulses freshened in treading them, would have been no phantom.

Through the ranks a soldierly joy prevailed, and with the rousing drum their spirits beat high.

They had reached the extreme limit of the mountain ridge, and were preparing to descend into the plain broadening at its foot, when, afar off, they espied, slowly heaving itself to and fro in the ocean, which sparkled in the mid-day sun beyond the plain, a vast body which soon shaped itself to their vision into the form of Behemoth.

The army halted and stood gazing. The giant beast seemed to be sporting with the ocean. For a moment he plunged into it, and swimming out a league with his head and lithe proboscis reared above the waters, spouted forth a sea of clear, blue fluid toward the sky, ascending to the very cloud, which, returning, brightened into innumerable rainbows, large and small, and spanned the ocean. Again he cast his huge bulk along the main, and lay, island-like, floating in the soft middle sun, basking in its ray, and presenting, in the grandeur and vastness of his repose, a monumental image of Eternal Quiet. Bronze nor marble have ever been wrought into sculpture as grand and sublime as the motionless shape of that mighty Brute resting on the sea.

Even at the remote distance from which they viewed him they could catch at times through the ocean-spray, the sparkle of his small and burning eye. Once, it seemed for a moment steadily fixed upon their host as it stood out conspicuously on the height, and, abandoning his gambols, Behemoth urged his bulky frame toward the land. Breasting the mighty surges which his own motion created, he sought the shore, and as he came up majestically from the water, a chasm ensued as if the Pacific shrunk from its limits. With a gurgling tumult the subsiding waves rushed into the broad hollow, and continued to eddy about its vortex.

Meantime Behemoth stood upon the earth, and rearing on his hindmost feet his foremost were lifted high in the air, and with a roar loud and fearful (like the gathering of an earthquake with its powers of desolation in the bowels of the earth) he brought them to the plain with a weight and energy which made it tremble to its utmost verge. He moved on; making straight toward the army of the Mound-builders. To the eyes of the astonished host, as he shouted with his fearful voice, he seemed like a dread thunder-cloud which gathers tone and volume as it rolls on assailing with its hollow peals the very walls of heaven. Bokul-

la was undismayed and calm. He saw that the hour for action had arrived, and marshalling his troops in proper order, he led them down a winding and gentle slope which descended to the plain. A short time sufficed and they reached the level ground. Disposing themselves in the preconceived order, they awaited the on-coming of Behemoth. The towers were planted firm on the earth; the pioneers put forth and the instrumental sounds began. As an additional thought a battalion of troops was placed on a level ledge of rocks, on the side of the mountain, and in advance of the main army, to gall him as he passed.

On his part there was no delay: with strides, like those of gods, he stalked forward. And still he seemed, to the Mound-builders, to grow with his advance. His bulk dilated, till it came between them and heaven, and filled the whole circuit of the sky. The firmament seemed to rest upon his wide shoulders as a mantle. As he neared upon their view, they saw more of his structure and properties. His face was like a vast countenance cut in stone, hewn from the hard granite of the mountain-side, with features large as those of the Egyptian sphinx. Before him he bore—terrible instrument of power! a mighty and lithe trunk, which, with swift skill, he coiled and darted through the air, like a monstrous serpent, arteried with poison and death. Guarding the trunk were two far extending tusks, which curved and flashed in the sun like scimitars. Over his huger proportions fear cast its shadow, and they saw them as through a cloud darkly. He moved forward, nevertheless, a vast machine of war, containing in himself all the muniments and defences of a well-appointed host. To the cool and courageous sagacity of the leader he seemed to join the strength and force of an embattled soldiery: to sharp and ready weapons of offence he added the defence of a huge and impenetrable frame. Through his small and flaming orbs, his soul shot forth in flashes dark and desperate. His neck was ridged with a short and stiff mane, which lent an additional terror to his bulk.

On he came. He neared the host of the Mound-builders. His fearful trunk was uplifted, and his tusks glanced in the broad beam of day over the heads of the army. Not a sword left its scabbard. Not an arrow was pointed. The brazen hammers and vessels of molten copper, which had alone been raised, fell back to their places, powerless and ineffective. The palsy of fear was upon the whole host. The near and unexpected vastness of Behemoth awed their souls. Bokulla alone retained his self-possession, and shouted to the affrighted squadrons: "Onward! Mound-builders—cheer up, and onward! the battle may yet be with us!" It was in vain. The vast proboscis descended, and crushed with its descent a whole phalanx. A second sweep, and the mighty wooden towers, with their hammers of brass,

their molten copper, and their indwelling defenders, were hurled on high, and, rushing to the earth, strewed the plain with their wreck.

Ten thousand perished under his feet as he trampled onward. Ten thousand fell stricken to the earth by the mere icy bolt of fear. The legion, stationed on the level ledge, were swept from their post, as the whirlwind sweeps the dust from the autumn leaf. Twice ten thousand and more fled up the mountain; across the prairies; and some, in their extreme of trepidation, sought shelter in the sea. With infinite ruin the main host lay scattered upon the prairie, shield, sword, bow, wagon, wagoner, spearsman, and pioneer. Over the plain, maddened by terror, the bison, with their vehicles, following in clattering haste, galloped, they knew not whither. Of a body of about fifteen thousand men, Bokulla, collected as ever, took command, and marshalling them through a narrow defile, led them up the mountain, from which the whole army had a few hours before descended in pomp and glory. Guiding them along the ridge by new and well-chosen paths, he hurried them forward. In the meantime Behemoth had accomplished his work upon the squadrons which were left. When the task of death and ruin was completed, he stood in the middle of the wreck, and, gazing about, seemed to seek for some portion of the host on whom desolation was yet to be wrought. With sagacious instinct he soon discovered the path which the missing legions had taken. Instantly abandoning the plain, he pressed toward the gap through which the retreating troops had fled.

Rushing through the defile, he was soon standing on the steps of Bokulla and his flying troops. Through each narrow pass of rocks the chieftain skillfully guided them, taking advantage of every object that might be an obstacle to the monstrous frame of their pursuer. Sometimes they mounted a sudden ascent, sometimes hastened through a narrow vale, or around a clump of mighty sycamores and cottonwoods. Nevertheless Behemoth pressed on. Behind them, terrible as the voice of death, they heard his resounding roar, and turned pale with affright. They had reached the crown of a hill, and were compassing a tall rock, which stood in their way, to descend, when they heard heavy, trampling steps behind them, and looking back, they beheld the ponderous bulk of the Mastodon urging rapidly up the ascent. Trepidation fastened on the ranks. Their knees smote together, and many, in the weakness of sudden fear, fell quaking to the earth. Some, in their alarms, cast themselves headlong from the height; some escaped into the neighboring woods, and two or three, bereft of sense by terror, fled into the very jaws of the huge beast himself. A small band only kept on their way with Bokulla.

Surging up the steep, and down the opposite descent, Behemoth pushed forward, trampling to the earth those who stood rooted in his path—

statues of despair—and was soon at the rear of the small flying troop.

He was at the very heels of the pale fugitives, and Bokulla, placing a trumpet at his lips, blew a long, loud, and what, in the hour of battle and under other auspices, would have been an inspiring blast, and endeavored to arouse in them sufficient spirit and strength to bear them to the shelter of a gigantic crag which stood in their path. Past this the velocity and impetus of the brute would inevitably force him, and they might rest for a moment, while he rushed down and reascended (if reascend he should) the declivity. The attempt was successful; the trumpet-blast, vainly blown, was borne far away into the forest, and, echoing from cliff to cliff, seemed only to vex the idle air.

From Bokulla, one by one, his followers fell off and perished by Behemoth, or crept into the grass and underwood to die a more lingering death. At length the chieftain was alone before his mighty pursuer; and yet he bated not a jot of heart or hope, but still bore up and steered right onward. With the emergency his courage, resolution, and forethought, arose.

He kept his way steadily, and the bison which drew him nobly seconded his purpose, and exhibited, as if inspired by the greatness of the occasion, the power of reason in comprehending, and a giant's strength in carrying out, the most expedient means for the rescue of his master. He seemed to apprehend every direction of Bokulla's at a thought. "To the right, between yon stout oaks! to the left—onward—Bokulla is at your mercy!" shouted the rider, and they swept along like the prophet and his chariot of fire. The night had gradually come on. Palpable twilight now overspread the scene, and, in a moment, the moon glided to her station in the zenith.

The woods through which Bokulla passed were now filled with shadows, which, crossing and blending with each other, would have confused mere human skill in selecting a path, but the bison dexterously steered on. With cumbersome but swift steps Behemoth still pursued, over hills, vales, mountains.

At length Bokulla reached that very summit where first the gigantic phantom had appeared, and where the impress of his steps was yet clearly left. He had just commenced his descent toward the villages of the mound-builders (thousands of whom looked toward his chariot as he sounded another call) and Behemoth stood behind him. The mighty brute, from some unaccountable motive, paused. He saw the chariot of Bokulla rapidly verging toward its home. He abandoned the pursuit, but yet yielded not his purpose of destroying the last of the army of the Mound-builders; for, loosening from its base a massy rock, which hung, threatening, over the village, he lifted it with his tusks, and, pushing it forward, urged it with tremendous force directly in the career of the chieftain. Thundering it followed him. It neared his chariot. Another turn and Bokulla

is crushed; but the Mound-builders shout in one voice, "To the right, Bokulla! to the right!" and, turning his chariot in that direction, he escapes the descending ruin, though enveloped in the dust of its track. Emerging quickly from the cloud, and avoiding the rocky mass, which rushed past him with terrible fury, Bokulla now reached the bottom of the mountain, and was surrounded instantly by innumerable Mound-builders, each with a fearful question on his lips, and the dread of a yet more fearful answer written in his countenance. Bokulla, alone and in flight, was a reply to all their thoughts could imagine or dread of what was terrible. Gazing upon him for a while in motionless silence, they at length burst the stupor which made them dumb, and each one asked for husband, brother, son, who had gone forth, a few days since, full of life and vigor, against Behemoth. "Death, defeat, and flight!" were all that escaped from Bokulla, and, breaking his way through the multitude, he sought his own home. Gathering about the house of the chieftain, men, women, and children, in large crowds, they cried out through the live-long night, while their tears fell, for their relatives who had ventured to the battle, and asked wherefore they came not back?

The next day, about noon, there rushed into the village, covered with foam and quaking with fear, troops of bison, followed by the framework on which the towers and machines of war had been raised, and, clattering through the streets with their enormous and lumbering wheels till they reached their stalls, they fell dead. To some of them a handful of men clung tenaciously, though pale and terror-stricken; and to the rear of one, hung by his feet, which were entangled in the leathern strap that had bound the frame together, a lifeless body, the scull of which was broken by rude and hasty contact with the earth, while the tufts of hair which remained were matted with grass, thorns, and mire, gathered as it was drawn swiftly along through the different varieties of verdure, marsh, and brambles.

The next day after that, at about night-fall, there came down the mountains which Bokulla had descended under circumstances of so much peril, a lean and tattered company, marshalled forward by the ghostlike figure of a chieftain, with a broken helm, husky voice, and swordless scabbard. They were a portion of the army which had gone forth with Bokulla, and had been reduced to their present pale and ragged condition partly by fear and partly by the want of food for the two days during which they had wandered in search of home. Many a wife and mother shed tears of mingled gratitude and pity as she looked upon the shattered wreck of her son or husband, thus cast up from the waves of war. Two or three days after this, and day by day, for some week or two, came into the villages of the Mound-builders, single fugitives or in pairs, when they had coupled themselves together, that, in this sorrowful fellowship, they

might aid each other in bearing up against terror, hunger, and death.

And even after a month had rolled round, and tears had been shed and rites performed for the absentees, two or three strayed home lunatic—poor idiots, whose brains had been crazed by the triple assault of fear, famine, and the dread of instant death under the hoofs of the enemy. From the account that could be gathered from their own wandering and confused wits, they had fled every inch of the way from the battle-ground under the terrible apprehension that Behemoth was at their heels. Through brake and through briar they hastened. They had scrambled over rocks and waded wide ponds; they had climbed trees and rested a little, and then, swinging themselves from the branches, had run miles over hot and streamless prairies, until they had reached their native villages, sad, witless idiots!

The catastrophe now stood out before the Mound-builders, drawn in bold, strong, and fearful strokes; painted in colors borrowed from the midnight, and dashed upon the canvass, it almost seemed, by the hand of destiny itself. The malignant planet, which had so long lowered in the atmosphere, had now burst, and poured from its womb all that was dreadful, pernicious, and enduring. The earth was now to them a cold, comfortless prison, into which they were plunged by an inexorable power, and where they were doomed to drag through their allotted portion of life under the eye of an eternal and terrible foe, joyless, hopeless, and prostrate. The multitude gave themselves to a quiet and passionless despair, Bokulla was silent or invisible.

Great occasions beget great men, while they have also a tendency to nurse into life petty spirits, which take the opportunity, uninvited, to push themselves into prominent posts. Thus the same emergency which elicited the resources of Bokulla's large and fruitful mind, also drew out the vagaries and absurdities of a puny intellect, Kluckhatch by name. On account of his dwarfish size and an unlucky curvature in the legs, this valorous gentleman had been rejected from the military companies. Nevertheless he kept a drum on his own account, with which he was wont to regale a rabble crowd of urchins and maidens; making a monthly tour through the villages and refreshing them with the dulcet sounds. He also wore in this itinerant and volunteer soldiery of his a small sword; a bright pyramidal blade of steel with a handle of elk's horn, the tip of which was surmounted with a clasp or circlet of silver and ornamented with the device of an owl hooting. The person of Kluckhatch was, as I have hinted, pigmean rather than otherwise. He had a low forehead with prominent cheek bones, and a broad full-moon face with large eyes, in which idiocy and self-conceit predominated, though they were occasionally enlivened with an expression of mirth and good-fellowship, and sometimes even brightened with

a humorous conception. On the crown of his head, to complete his garniture, Kluckhatch bore a cap of conical figure, with a flattened circular summit, ending at the apex with a round button of copper. Attached to the sides of the cap were two large ear-flaps of deer-skin, or that of some other indigenous animal, made to cover ears as large.

"I believe," said this self-constituted champion, when every plan suggested and acted upon had proved fruitless, "I believe," said he, "I must take this huge blusterer in hand. I look for a mound of the largest size at least for my memory if I lay him at length, and a patent of nobility for my family. Kluckhatch is no fool—is he?" asked the vainglorious militant, turning with a cocked eye to a shock-headed youth who stood gaping at his elbow. The boy replied with a similar squint, and Kluckhatch ran on, detailing at length, like a crafty plotter, the whole course of strategy he intended to put in practice against Behemoth, naming the time when, and the place where, he expected to achieve his capture at least, if not his death.

In accordance with this carefully matured plot, one bright and cold autumn morning Kluckhatch sallied forth accoutred to a point with dagger, hat and sword-belt, to which was attached, special ministrant in the anticipated capture, his little drum, with the melodious sounds of which he expected to quell and mollify the mighty rage of Behemoth. Over his right shoulder he bore a light ladder of pine of great length, with which he intended to mount to Behemoth's neck and inflict the fatal wound with his trenchant blade.

Thus armed and accoutred Kluckhatch set forth. Fortunately on the morning which he chose for his adventure, the Mastodon was not far off but pastured in a broad open meadow within sight of the Mound-builders' villages. When Kluckhatch first beheld him opening and closing his mighty jaws as he cropped the tall verdure, his soul trembled within him and vibrated to and fro, like a mariner's needle, between the determination to retreat and that to advance. At length however it settled down true to its purpose. He marched forward beating a reveillé on his dwarfish drum, while he whistled faintly as an accompaniment. He was now within stone's throw of the monster. He had lowered the ladder from his shoulder, that he might be better prepared to scale the sides of the Beast. Behemoth ceased from the labor of feeding; a moment his eye twinkled on the puissant Kluckhatch, and the next, unrolling his trunk, he coiled it about the slender body of the adventurer, and lifting him gently from the earth, as gently tossed him some score of yards into a neighboring pond, which was about five feet deep, and mantled with a covering of stagnant water. Into this Kluckhatch descended and fell amid a noisy company of large green bull-frogs who were holding a meeting for general consultation and the ex-

pression of opinion. Amid the blustering assembly the valiant little hero fell. For a time, as he hung balanced in the air, it was doubtful which portion of his person would first penetrate the water.

The levity of his head and the weight of his splay-feet, at length brought the latter first to the pool, and dividing the stagnant surface, they sank through and reached a bottom of mud; still they sank and continued to settle down deeper and deeper. Kluckhatch knew not where his descent would stop, nor where in the end he might arrive. His feet at last found support just as his chin reached the waters' edge, and, looking up, the first object that fell upon his vision was a household of venerable and contemplative crows who, seated on a dry tree at the edge of the pool, seemed to be philosophizing over his mishaps, in their most doleful discords. One, an old rake, with only an eye left in his head, appeared to Kluckhatch, as he leered knowingly upon him, to be a desperate quizz. When, after many vain efforts, he had brought his scattered senses into something like order, reaching forth one hand he grasped his drum, which floated at a distance on the pool, and held it up tremblingly, while with the other he drew from his belt a drum-stick which survived his fall. Stretching out the hand that held the stick, he struck up a faint tattoo on the parchment, with the double purpose of driving off those accursed and hard-hearted crows, and also to draw help from the nearest village. To the instrumental sounds thus elicited he added an humble vocal effort. Here was a scene for a painter: Kluckhatch, the drum, and the crows, all in unison, running down the scale from lofty bass to shrill treble.

The hero soon tired of his toilsome essays at the two kinds of music under his charge, and putting forth all his strength in a desperate venture, he succeeded, scrambling, floundering, and paddling, in reaching the shore endued in a coat-of-mail, composed of black slime and green ooze, with long locks of eel-grass dangling at his heels, as trophies of his exploit. Satisfied with this valorous attempt at the capture of the huge blusterer, Kluckhatch skulked home.

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## PART SECOND.

It was two hours before sunrise. Through the wide realm of the populous west not a soul was stirring, save a single human figure, which threaded its way through the streets of one of the great cities of the Mound-builders. This solitary object moved at a slow, measured pace, as if its progress was actually retarded by the weight of the thoughts with which it labored. The eyes gleamed as if they beheld, afar off, some enterprise of magnitude and obstinacy sufficient to call up the whole soul of the man, and the lines of the countenance worked, and



the hands were clenched, as if he was already employed in the struggle. If one could have looked into his bosom, he might have seen all his faculties mustering to the encounter; and, among other passions, aroused and assembling there, he might have noted discomfiture and mortification thrusting in their hated visages, and lending a keener stimulus and quicker motion to the current of his thoughts. He might have also discovered an heroic resolution, almost epic in its proportions and strength, towering up from amid the ruins of many cast-down and desolated projects, and assuming to contend with unconquerable might.

The solitary figure was that of Bokulla, who was thus venturing forth, self-exiled and alone, to discover, in the broad wilderness toward the sea, whatever means of triumph he might, over a power that had hitherto proved itself more than a match for human strength or cunning. A great spirit had taken possession of the chieftain, and the shame of an inglorious defeat aided to kindle the energy of his passions. Over that defeat he had already pondered, long, and anxiously. He confessed to himself that he had formed but a vague opinion of the hugeness and strength of Behemoth when he had proposed the battle. But he dwelt in the midst of a terrified and perishing people. As a man he was touched by the sufferings and alarms of his nation. Danger and death were before them, and no gate of safety or mercy opened. He saw this people, not only in the present time, but through a long futurity, scourged and suffering; the old tottering into a hasty grave, pursued by a hideous phantom that increased its terrors; the young growing up with images and thoughts of fear interwoven with their tender and pliant elements of being.

Was there no one man, in this whole nation, who would go forth, in the spirit of martyrdom and self-sacrifice, and seek, even in the desert itself, the knowledge that would bring strength and safety in its wings? It was he that was now passing away from his country, for a while, and launching himself in the boundless wilderness of the west. Championed by doubt and solitude, he was plunging into a region which stretched, he knew not whither, and to a fate, perchance, his heart dared not whisper to itself. What fruit might spring from this hardy enterprise, it was vain to conjecture; but he was determined to gather some knowledge of the habits, and some information as to the lodgment of this terrible scourge of his people. With rapid and firm step, he therefore proceeded on his way. By secret paths, and through dark woods, he advanced, and midday brought him to a spot which overlooked the whole of the wide territory of the Mound-builders.

He stood upon a cliff which pushed out boldly from the wooded region that lay behind it, and hung, like a platform, over a valley and river that wound round its base. It was covered in patches with verdure and earth, from

which a few stately trees threw up their branches, and underneath these Bokulla now stood.

Casting his eye abroad, he beheld a scene which the boldest fancy of our time can scarcely conceive, accustomed as we are to think of the prairies as tenantless and houseless deserts, and the whole broad west as a wild, unpeopled region, never disturbed unless by bands of straggling Indian hunters, or a mad herd of buffalo, sweeping, like a tornado, over their bosom. From his lofty stand the self-exiled chieftain looked down upon a country belting a hundred leagues, swelling or declining through a glorious variety of hill, and vale, and meadow, with a thousand streams intersecting the whole, sometimes mingling with each other, occasionally ploughing their way through a genial valley, or cutting deep into the heart of a mountain, whose slope was covered with forests. A numerous population lined their banks, or hovered on their eminences, whose dwellings and national edifices reared themselves in the air and darkened the land with their number. Over those vast, verdant deeps, the prairies, were scattered, like islands, countless cities, in whose suburbs tall towers of granite and marble sprang to the sky, and resembled the masts of ships of war just putting out from the shore. In another direction, a mighty bastion of earth, with its round, green summit, heaved itself into view, like the back of some huge sea-monster; and the long grass of the prairies, swept by occasional winds, rolled to and fro and furnished the ocean-like surges on which all these objects rode triumphant.

Upon this scene Bokulla gazed long and earnestly, while many dark thoughts, and sad emotions followed each other like the clouds of summer through his mind, and darkened his countenance as they passed. Beneath him he saw a hundred cities devoted to ruin; tower, and temple, and dwelling, crumbled to the earth, and no hand lifted to arrest their fall. A wide populace was wasting away from a robust and manly vigor, into a pale and shadow-like decrepitude. Day by day the august majesty of a prosperous and ambitious nation dwindled into a shrunken and counterfeit image of itself. To them there was now no alternation of sunshine or shadow; seasons passed without their fruits; the golden summer no longer smiled in their midst, and generous autumn departed without a blessing and unheeded.

To these miserable and suffering realms Bokulla now bade farewell. His present enterprise might be without fruit, or fraught with disastrous and fatal results to himself; yet, in the strength of nature, he would once more presume to cope with the dreaded enemy, for he still believed that man must be triumphant, in the end, over this bestial domination. To man the earth was given as his kingdom, and all tribes and classes of creatures were made his subjects and vassals. In this faith he turned away from a scene which suggested so many

fearful topics of thought, and bent his course toward the west, guided by such knowledge as he already enjoyed, and such marks as occurred to his observation, determined to avoid the face of man, and to be familiar only with solitude and danger, until some new means of triumph were clearly discovered. Pursuing this resolve, he pushed forward with speed and energy; plucking, by the way, wild berries and other natural fruits as food, and drinking of the cool, shaded rivulet, his only beverage; for, from the first moment that he had conceived the thought of this venturesome self-exile, he vowed to cast himself on nature, and to be received and sustained by her as her worthy child, or to perish as an alien and an outcast on her bosom. He had, therefore, come forth unprovided with food, and trusting entirely to her bounty for supply.

Hand in hand thus with liberal Nature, Bokulla pressed onward until night-fall, when he halted, and, sheltering himself safely within the hollow of a rock, he gathered himself for repose.

Thus for many days did this solitary pilgrim journey on, seeking no other couch but the overhanging cliff or the sheltering bank, and finding no other canopy but the broad, open sky and the green roof of the branching tree. A constant grandeur of soul sustained him in the midst of many pressing hardships, and a noble purpose bore him forward as the winds propel the eagle that trusts to their strength. Guided by apparent tracks and obvious landmarks, about the middle of the afternoon of the second day he reached a solemn wood, into the heart of which he made his way.

He was wearied with travel, and seeing the remains of a large old oak thrusting themselves up from the tangled and chequered shade, he seated himself upon them. The wild underwood and smaller foliage were twisted into a thousand fantastic shapes, which wreathed themselves round, and the prodigal forest-flowers had scattered their colors here and there so profusely over the seat which the self-exile had chosen, as to furnish somewhat the appearance of a cushioned throne. What wonder if the resemblance struck the excited imagination of Bokulla, and his eye glanced about the forest as if in search of attendants that should hedge this seat of honor round. "Am I alone here!" half-muttered the chieftain. "Is all this pleasant realm of air, and this verdurous spot of earth void and barren! No, no; I am not in an unpopulous solitude even here. Airy citizens throng about me in this remote and unfrequented wood. Busy hopes, immortal desires, passions, longings, and aspirations that lengthen like shadows the nearer we approach the sunset of life. Mighty and tumultuous wishes and emotions gather around me in this pathless and woodland region, and tell me I am not, that I can not be, alone. Shadowy creatures! which sway us beyond all corporal powers and instruments—ye swarm now in these shaded walks—and foremost Ambition and

Fame, glorious twins! stand forth and tower in cloudy stature, grasping at impossible objects and plucking at the heavens themselves! Immortal powers and faculties! in these retired and natural chambers, I know you as the internal and silent agencies which are to guide and sustain me through this hardy and venturesome pilgrimage."

In this wood he found a suitable shelter and stretched himself for sleep. Notwithstanding the great cares with which he was oppressed, the mind of the chieftain was visited by pleasant dreams; and he was borne far back from the gloomy and troubled present, into an old and cheerful time, where everything wore a countenance of joy, and a golden atmosphere floated about all. He wandered along the banks of mighty streams, watching the careless flight of birds, or the idle motions of their currents, on which many vessels of gallant trim, with every sail set, were hastening toward the sea. Around him a thousand familiar sounds made the common music of day; trumpets were sounded in the distance; citizens were hurrying forth or home on errands of business, or pleasure, or tender sorrow; and all was human and delightful. The chieftain himself seemed to have the heart of youth, and to ramble onward amid these pleasant scenes of life as if no morrow was coming, as if the sun that was now in mid-heaven would never set.

Near the close of the night, this pageant passed away, and the slumbers of the champion were interrupted by a loud sound, like that of a storm gathering in the distance, and which drew nearer by, increasing every moment. Presently it seemed to cross the western quarter of the wood with a clashing and tumultuous noise, resembling that of a great cataract, and then it passed far to the northwest, and died away after a long time, like rattling thunder, among the distant peaks of the mountains.

Nothing could be more alarming to the imagination than this midnight tumult, and Bokulla felt that his situation was like that of the wretched mariner, whose bark is dashed on the rocks of some inhospitable shore, where night and the raging winds press on him behind, and darkness and the wild beast prepare to fasten on his weather-beaten body as he strikes the land. But no sound that Bokulla had ever known could represent the character of that which rebelled, and thundered, and died away. The stormy shouts of a warlike assault, the furious outcry of popular rage, the howling of winter winds, all commixed, would be an imperfect image of its depth, and strength, and varying loudness. In the morning, disturbed and perplexed, he girded himself again to his task, and shaped his course toward that region of the forest by which the indescribable tumult had swept. An hour's swift travel brought him to a large wooded slope, which presented to his view, in the uncertain light of a sun obscured by the gray mist of morning, an astonishing spectacle. A thousand vast old trees, each

large enough for the main column of a temple, were dashed against the upland and lay there, leaning half-way down, as if they had contested against overthrow, like mighty ships, blown over in the harbor of some great city, when the north has burst upon them and commanded that they should veil their pennons and high-aspiring standards.

From obvious footmarks he easily discovered the course which the strength that caused this desolation had taken, and pursuing the indications thus furnished, he was soon out upon an open plain. The region that now spread before him was a wide and trackless waste, barren, void of vegetation, and apparently deserted of nature. Such herbage as lingered about its borders, was small, scanty, and withered, and crept gloomily along the dusty banks of dried-up brooks and rivulets. Over this arid desert, as Bokulla slowly plodded, he discovered the same large foot-prints as he had followed all along, crossing and re-crossing each other, sometimes diverging and again keeping straight on, in a manner so irregular and wandering, as to bewilder him and set any attempt to pursue them entirely at naught.

In some places the earth was ploughed up and rent with seams recently made, and in others it was scattered far and wide, in irregular and broken heaps. The whole wilderness presented an appearance as if it had been recently trampled by some angry and barbaric puissance, that had swept it from end to end, like a storm.

What now rendered his situation still more perplexing, was that which would seem at first a source of self-gratulation and comfort, after the fearful sounds of the preceding night. A dead silence hung all around him, which was, if possible, more dreary and depressing than the unearthly noises of midnight. A soundless and voiceless quiet filled the air, the sky, and brooded over the inanimate sea of sand slumbering at his feet.

Through this confused and desolate region, the chieftain resolved to make his way to the summit of some one of the mountains that dominated this arid plain at its farthest extremity, and thence, as from a citadel, look abroad and make such discoveries as he might.

Bokulla at length reached the summit of a high mountain, and looking forth toward the east, he beheld a mighty region of hill and valley, whose immensity astonished and overwhelmed him. In one direction, a hundred peaks towered one above the other, until the farthest was lost, it seemed, on the very threshold of the sky. In another, torrents dashed through numerous declivities, tearing down mountains, it almost seemed, in their rage, and threatening to wash away the very foundations of the earth, as they leaped over rocks, and crags, and rugged precipices. Huge passes and defiles that ploughed their way through the bosoms of solid mountains, and led down, as it were, to the central fires, were visible in other

quarters, and exhibited more or less of their dreary turnpikes, as the sunlight fell upon one or the other. As Bokulla looked forth, he descried a dark object moving slowly along a distant peak. Sometimes it paused, and then again advanced; at length it plunged down the mountain-side into a deep and dark valley, but still some portion of it was apparent; and at intervals, as it crossed a seam or gap that intersected the valley, the whole figure came into view. Thus it wound through the immense region, almost the whole time conspicuous to the eye of the gazer, who, however, was unable to discover its character, so remote was the distance at which it moved. At length it emerged from the many defiles and declivities, among which it had passed, and came out upon the open plain.

As a numerous fleet of war-ships, all their canvass spread, double some one of the Atlantic capes, and come within the ken of the anxious watcher on shore, so did this vast object steer round the mountain-base and stand before the eye of Bokulla. Like a huge fog that has settled in autumn upon the ground, and creeps along until it has mastered the earth with its broad dimensions, so did the stature and bulk of the Mastodon tower and enlarge as it drew nigh. Among those mighty peaks, and along that immeasurable plain, he seemed to move the suitable and sole inhabitant. Rocks piled on rocks, and rivers, the parents of oceans, calling unto rivers as large, and dreadful summits that hung over the earth and threatened to crush it, were not its massy plains and platforms broad enough to uphold mountains a hundred fold vaster, this was the proper birth-place and dwelling of the mightiest creature of the earth.

Amid these great elements of nature, Bokulla beheld the motions of the Mastodon as he trode the earth in gigantic sway; and thought swelled upon tumultuous thought, as waves that break over each other in the middle ocean, at each step of that unparalleled and majestic progress. What wonder, if at that moment he deemed the great creature before him unassailable and immortal? Behemoth passed onward, and for the first time in many hours was lost to the gaze of the chieftain, as he entered a dark gap in a great mountain-range far to the east. Intent on the daring and venturesome purpose which had drawn him forth into the wilderness, he descended from his lofty station, and shaped his course to the barriers within which the unconquered brute had passed. With incredible labor he toiled over a thousand obstacles; clambering high mountains, plodding through gloomy valleys, and compassing, by contrivance sometimes, sometimes by sheer strength, broad streams, he found himself at length, as the night approached, fixed on a lofty ridge, whence his eye fell upon a spacious amphitheatre of meadow, completely shut in by rocks and mountains, save at a single narrow cut or opening. In the centre of this he beheld Behemoth cou-

chant (his head turned toward the chieftain himself) like a sublime image of stone in the middle of a silent lake. Bokulla exhibited no symptoms of terror or trepidation, and the beast lay motionless and quiet. Great emotions filled the breast of the chieftain as he looked upon the Mastodon reposing in this fortified solitude. He closely scrutinized the whole circle of mountains, and took an accurate survey of the gate which led out into the open country beyond. Among other circumstances, he observed large hollows, here and there, in different quarters of the plain, as if worn there by the constant habitation of Behemoth; and also, that as the wind sighed through the branches of trees that stood in its centre and along its border, the Mastodon moved up and down the amphitheatre with a slow and gentle motion, as if soothed by the sound.

While he was thus engaged, night descended upon the scene; and the dark hours were to be passed by Bokulla alone in that far-off wilderness, and within reach of the mighty and terrible foe. As well as he might he addressed himself to sleep; but it was almost in vain, for it seemed as if the fearful strength beneath was slumbering at his side, and as if its tall, cold shadow fell upon him and froze the very blood in his veins. Armed beings of an inconceivable and superhuman stature passed and re-passed before his mind; and the vision of a conflict mightier than any that his mortal eyes had ever witnessed, in which huge trumpets brayed and enormous shields clashed against each other, swept along. Then it changed, and it seemed as if the mountains rocked to and fro, and pent winds strove to topple down peaks and pinnacles, while in their midst one mighty Figure, neither of man nor of angel, stood chained, and, in a deep and fearful voice, cried to the heavens for succor. Perplexed by images and visions like these, Bokulla awakened before the dawn, and turned his steps, with scarce any guide or landmark, toward his own home.

And now an appalling fate was before the champion, for he was without food in the very centre of the desert. The liberal fare upon which he had at first subsisted, was gone long ago, and the scanty supply which nature had lately furnished from hedges and meadows, had entirely ceased. Barrenness, barrenness, barrenness, spread all around. After toil and exertion of body and mind, almost beyond mortal strength, he seemed likely to perish in the wastes with the great project that his soul had conceived unknown to living man. Interminable and gloomy disasters lowered over his country if he should perish in the wilderness. He struggled onward with anguish and hunger at his heart.

At last, when his strength was fast ebbing, he came at night-fall upon a vast open plain, and dragged himself, with a pang in every step, to a crag that jutted, like a great fang, in its very centre. Upon this he raised himself, and

with features sternly set against the darkness, awaited his fate. Narrower and narrower the great circle of the horizon closed upon him, binding him where he sat in an inexorable grasp. A black universe pressed upon him on every side, and seemed eager to smother him up in gloom. Against hunger and terrible darkness and death, he folded his arms. Even then he strained his gaze through the thick night, toward the quarter of the sky under which lay the homes of the Mound-builders, as if to learn by some light that flickered up in the distance, whether any, the faintest hope, kindled a fire-side among them yet. Blackness and infinite gloom alone swelled about him, and filled the whole heaven.

No sleep came to his eyes that night, nor was he altogether wakeful, but lingered in a middle world, where the images of the new being and the old held him fast, or yielded him for a time to the other. At one time, a voice was at his ear, whispering peace and tranquil hours henceforth for ever; a voice that came he knew from a shining face. At another, a cry, as of one shrieking in excess of pain, came booming through the dark, and cut all his human sense of suffering to the quick.

At length the slow morning dawned again, and looking forward, where he thought he had discerned a dull marsh stretching to bar his way, he found instead a long green line of verdure, smiling freshly in the eye of the light. In its very midst there stood a calm, brown bird, reposing with an infinite quietude, with an eye obliquely turned upward, contemplatively regarding the sun, and stretching its wings to catch the warm breeze that rippled past.

A new pleasure shot into the soul of the champion, beholding this easy mirth of nature—this so-great repose: the bird heaving itself sluggishly on the wing, crept lazily off through the air; and, regarding it, while his mind was thus gently moved, a sound, as of a beautiful hoof set upon the earth, struck upon his ear. He turned back, and at the spot from which the bird had taken flight, there stood a steed, so young, so smooth, so shapely in every limb, and so like a happy creature of darkness in every line of its glossy black, that Bokulla mused upon it as upon a vision.

Tranquil as the air it stood, its head uplifted only and drinking in the sky, with its neck stretched far away toward the home of the champion. Bokulla knew the omen, and with a spirit fresh and unbroken he stood beside the steed, and at a bound was his master.

Away they flew—the crag, the plain, the sky dying behind them at a thought. Gently through fair green glades—at a bound over vales and rugged steep—swiftly past stupendous peaks, that held aloft their dazzling snow-sheets, as with a mighty tented staff—along a heavy river that strove to run an even race with them,—past cataracts that burst on the wilderness in crashing peels—they speeded on. Over hills, through forests, and along stream-sides,

the wondrous flight kept on all that day and all that night too (Heaven in its deep providences knew how), when, at the next day's dawn, upon a mountain-brow the steed stayed his steps, and a populous city burst upon the gaze of Bokulla, directly at his feet. The steed stood still in the immovable quiet in which the chieftain first beheld him—silent, gentle, beautiful, the calm counter-image to Behemoth. Wide upon the plain below the scattered Mound-builders stood about, striving to worship as of old; and as their lifted look fell upon the new vision, they clapped their hands for joy, and shouted like men before whose shipwrecked gaze land suddenly springs to view. It showed to them fair, beautiful indeed, but when, breaking the spell of silence and quietude that held him, the steed hastened down the mountain-side, and galloped through their streets, they beheld the rider—his features gaunt and unearthly, his hair streaming wildly to the wind—they fled from his steps with a new fear.

Some sought refuge in their dwellings, while others rushed out to gaze upon him as he scampered, wild and spectre-like, along the distance; and others gathered together, and, in subdued voices, conjectured or canvassed the character of the sudden apparition. Many wild guesses and shrewd suggestions were ventured.

"This is a fiend of the prairie," said one, "he that rambles up and down the big meadow, blowing his horn, and who calls the wolves and goblins together when a carcass is thrown out or a traveller perishes in crossing them."

"It is a lunatic, escaped from his friends," said a second, "who has been out, seeking his wits in the mountains."

"You are wide of the mark, my good sirs," said another, a sharp-eyed little man, glaring about and looking up at the windows, as if afraid of being overheard; and the group pressed more closely about him, as if expecting a communication of great weight and shrewdness—"a whole bowshot wide of the mark—it is the keeper of Behemoth!"

At this they all turned pale and lifted up their eyes in astonishment, and admitted that nothing could be nearer the truth.

By this time Bokulla had reached his own door, and, throwing himself from his steed of the desert, prepared to enter in; but, ere he could effect this object, several stout citizens pressed before him and arrested his steps.

"Wherefore is this?" said the foremost. "will you rush into a house of mourning in this guise? Know you not that this is the mansion of Bokulla the champion—and that his widow is in sackcloth and tears within? Begone elsewhere, madman!"

This remonstrance was seconded by another, and a third, until it swelled so high that the crowd would have seized him, and wreaked some injury upon his person, had he not succeeded in obtaining a moment's pause; and,

standing on an elevation, he shouted out, "Peace, Mound-builders, it is Bokulla before you!"

At this declaration many began to recognise in the shrunken features and toil-worn frame before them, their great champion and chieftain, and a shout was raised, "Life and health to Bokulla, the father of his country!" "Pleasant dew fall upon him!" "Long may he tread the green earth under his feet!" and many national invocations and blessings.

The rumor now spread rapidly abroad, and the cry was taken up, wherever it reached, and renewed with hearty goodwill, for all were rejoiced at the return of their great leader, whom some had considered lost for ever, and who all admitted was the only one that could contend, with any chance of success, against their barbaric foe. Even the little group of gossips that had construed him into a fiend, a lunatic, and the keeper of Behemoth, but a moment before, now rushed eagerly forward, and were among the first to welcome him back, the sharp-eyed little man invoking a special blessing on his pleasant countenance, which looked, he said, "like that of a saving angel!" Escaping from these numerous tokens of admiration and regard, Bokulla withdrew into his dwelling, and the crowd, after lingering about for many hours to glean such information as they might of his absence and to catch a view of his person, at length dispersed, each, he knew not why, with a lighter heart, and more joyous look, than had fallen to his lot for many long and weary months.—

From the dwelling of Bokulla let us turn our steps, for a while, toward the suburbs of the city, and enter the sick-chamber of Kluckhatch, the blusterer. The adventure of that valiant pretender against Behemoth had been accompanied with serious, and, from the aspect they at present assumed, perhaps fatal consequences. The alarm of spirits which he had suffered, together with the dreary submersion in the pool, had thrown the adventurer into a violent ague. Day by day the malady became more tyrannical, and the mind of Kluckhatch more fretful and restless. His soul seemed, like the sun, to expand as it approached its final eclipse, and nature, who, at his birth, had exhibited the art and skill of a bottle-conjurer in crowding so puissant a spirit into so narrow a body, now seemed at a loss to drive the obstinate tenant from its residence. The little man clung more desperately to life the more forcible the attempt made to wrest it from him. The pale ague assailed him with its whole band of forces; throttling him by the throat, as it were, it essayed, by rough and uncourteous usage, to shake the vital spirit from him, but it adhered closer and closer, and the attempt of nature to cast off the pigmy militant, resembled that of a horse, in whose flank, on a midsummer's day, a burr has chanced to fix itself; he feels annoyed and irritated—he whisks the hairy brush to and fro—he runs—he gallops—he rears—he

plunges, but all in vain, the barbarous annoyance clings to him with the more zeal, until, at some quiet moment, it drops gently from its hold, and disturbs him no more. Thus stood the account between nature and Kluckhatch. In his bed he lay, trembling like an earthquake or an ocean, under the coverlid. After a while the ague relaxed, and the fever came on; and then he sat up in his couch, and grasping a wooden sword, which had been made to amuse his sick and distempered fancy, he made airy thrusts and lounges, and called out as if he were plunging it deep in invisible ribs, or hacking at the head of some monstrous chimera. Then, again, he would appear to seize the end of some palpable object, and, drawing it along, would measure and cut off pieces of a yard in length at a time. It was evident, from the whole tenor of his strange action, that the Mastodon was in his phantasy; and this was amply confirmed by his breaking out, after the fever had partially subsided, into the following wild invectives, with a gasp between each, into which his soul seems to have thrown its whole collected powers.

"This huge bully; this fleshly continent; this vagabond traveller; this beast mountain; this tornado in leather; this bristly goblin;"—

"Pray be calm, Kluckhatch," whispered the shock-headed youth, who stood at his bedside, terrified and quaking.

"This huge, moving show; this two-horned wonder; this tempest of bull's-beef; this land-leviathan; fiend; wood-elf; this devil's ambassador; this territory of calves'-hide, stretched on a mountain; this untanned libel on leather-dressers; this unhung homicide;"—

"Uncle Kluckhatch," again interrupted his attendant, "Uncle Kluckhatch, wherefore do you rail after this fashion? you but madden your fever."

"This empire of bones and sinew; this monstrous government on legs; this tyrant with a tail; this rake-helly; this night-brawler; this measureless disgust; this lusty thresher, with his endless flail; this magnified ox; this walking abomination; this enormous discord, sounding in base; this huge, tuneless trombone;"—

The sick dwarf fell back on his pillow, exhausted, his lips still moving as if laden with other bitter epithets of denunciation. His hour now rapidly drew nigh; his strength gradually ebbed away, and, at length, the conviction that he must die forced its way into the heavy brain of Kluckhatch. In a few words he made his humble, and, of course, lean will. "I leave," said he, to his gaping companion, "I leave to you my fame, my virtues, and my drum!" He then gave directions for his burial, which, if obeyed, would make it a spectacle rare and unexampled; and, rising once more in his bed, he said he wished to expire in a sitting attitude.

The last sinking wave of life was dying upon the shore. His simple attendant had taken in his hand, to survey its fashion and its prop-

erties, the testamentary bequest of his departing friend.

"Strike up! strike up, once more!" exclaimed Kluckhatch, as his eye kindled with the gleam of death, and as the first sounds rolled from the drum under the obedient hand of its new possessor, the spirit of the pretender, mingling with them, left the earth.

The second morning after his death, at an early hour, the funeral procession set out from the domicile of Kluckhatch for the tomb of his forefathers, a snug family vault, just beyond the skirts of the town. Under the direction of the shock-headed youth, who enacted the master of ceremonies, the solemn cavalcade was drawn up, and proceeded in the following order:

First, led on by the legatee himself, in front of whose person hung suspended the testamentary drum, hobbled slowly along a sorry and cadaverous jade, which had been the pack-saddle of Kluckhatch in his strolling tours. One eye of the sad creature was wholly closed and useless, but the other, as if to make amends, was a sea-green orb of twice the ordinary dimension, and, with its ample circle of white, blazed like the moon crossing the milky-way in the sky. His lank, hollow body bore clear evidence of the neglected meadows and scant mangers of the Mound-builders; for he had been on fast, broken by occasional spare morsels, for more than a month, and glided along in the procession like a spectre. Behind this monkish-looking beast followed a low wagon or four-wheeled cart, drawn by a pair of venerable and spiritless bisons, in which sat the blusterer himself, erect and in the costume of every-day life, his strange red coat shining like a meteor, conspicuous from afar, while his conical cap nodded gayly to the one side or the other, as the wind swayed it. The strange whipster held the reins firmly between his skeleton fingers, and exhibited on his countenance a broad, ghastly grin, which, at the first view, startled the beholders, but after they had recovered from the shock, caused them to burst into a hearty laugh. On each side of the vehicle thus strangely driven, marched, in serious order, six sturdy men, each bearing a huge rustic pipe or whistle, wrought of reed, on which they blew soft and melancholy music. Behind the wagon, the favorite dog of Kluckhatch, crestfallen and whining, was led in a string. In the rear of this faithful mourner followed the friends and admirers of the deceased, and after these scrambled a promiscuous rout of his town's-people, of every variety, age, sex, and hue.

Creation itself, both overhead and on the earth, was something in unison with the grotesque obsequies. In one quarter of the sky, which resembled the bottom of a rich sea, suddenly disclosed, a vast cloud, like a whale, floundered and tumbled over the azure depths. In another, the clouds lay piled in heaps of shining silver; here they assumed the form of a shattered wreck, fleecy vapors standing out

as mast or bowsprit, with evanescent bars for rigging, and there a black and jagged mass of them, stretched along like a reef of dangerous and stubborn rocks. Lower down, a small, dismantled fragment, mottled with white, sunlit scales, represented a mackerel, at full length, opening his mouth and biting at the tail of a cloudy grampus that stood rampant just overhead. In the midair, drawn thither by the strangely exposed remains of Kluckhatch, a sable-coated troop of ravens kept the procession company, occasionally demanding, in coarse, rude clamors, their reversonary right in the deceased. Now and then a timid bird put forth his head from the trees and bushes at the roadside, and twittering for a moment, and seeming to smile at the defunct rider, hopped back into its cool hiding-place.

In a little while they reached the place of burial, a small, suburban vault, the passage to which, through a wooden door, led down to a score of cells or apartments, all of which, save one, were occupied. Over the entrance to the vault stood the weather-bleached skeleton of a robustus ancestor of Kluckhatch, balancing on one of his short, stout legs, flourishing the other as if in the act of going through a pirouette, and holding, in his outstretched right hand, the effigies of an owl, the favorite family bird and device.

For what reason, or whether for any, the little, queer skeleton occupied this position, it would be now difficult to decide. Perhaps, in his lifetime, he had been a hard, weather-beaten hunter, who preferred to be left thus in the free, naked air, and under the open sky, which during life he had enjoyed without stint or circumscription. Passing underneath the figure of this portentous guardian, and through the passage, they bore the mortal remains of the last of the Kluckhatches, and placed them in their upright posture in the only cell which remained untenanted. The moment it was known that the corse was deposited in its final place of rest, the twelve stout whistlers let off four successive volleys of their peculiar music; the dog came forward and howled, and the shock-headed youth stood at the entrance of the vault sobbing and weeping, while the beast, whose halter he held in his hand, silently devoured the drumhead and looked inside for further viands. A few moments more and the door was closed for ever between the world and Kluckhatch.

The unexpected departure of Bokulla from their midst had been a source of fruitful and anxious speculation to the Mound-builders. They were conscious of his absence, as if the great orb itself had left the skies and deprived the earth of its light and influence. His presence diffused among them the only cheerful ray that enlightened their gloomy condition; and although his recent enterprise had proved disastrous, they were satisfied that the great chieftain would promptly grasp the first favoring cir-

cumstance, and energetically use it against the fearful foe.

Of the causes of his absence none were advised, nor as to the direction his steps had taken. Some dreaded lest he had gone forth to perish by his own hand in the wilderness; and, by these, scouts had been dismissed in every quarter, to bring back the fugitive warrior, or his body, for honorable sepulture, if he had perished. The agitation and fear, excited by the causeless and unexplained absence of Bokulla, were only less than those occasioned by the terrible presence of the Mastodon. His return, therefore, was welcomed with every demonstration of rejoicing. Lights were displayed, as glad signals, from every tower; processions and cavalades were formed to make triumphal marches through the realm, and bodies of citizens constantly gathered under the window of the chieftain, to express their delight at his return. During a whole week this universal festivity was sustained, and it seemed as if the flower of national hope once more blossomed in their midst. Merry games were celebrated in their gardens; religious worship again assumed its robe, and walked forth with serene and placid features in the traces of its early duty.

What gave additional animation to this unwonted scene was, that Behemoth, during its continuance, ceased to sadden or alarm them with his presence; it may have been that the dazzling splendor of the illumination, and the loud sound of innumerable instruments all playing together, kept him back.

About two weeks after the return of the self-exiled chieftain, and at the close of their joyous celebrations, he appeared before the Mound-builders, and declared "that his strange and unexplained absence had not been without its uses. Nature," he said, "had put forth her mighty hand and generously furnished the means of deliverance. Liberty was now before them, but it must be attained through many perils and through toil, sanctified, perchance, with blood. Like the swimmer that nears the shore, they must now buffet the wave of hostile fortune with their sternest strength. It might be that once more the firm and smiling continent of joy, of honor, and peace, could be reached. If so, Heaven should be praised with a deep sense of gratitude, and the realm should ring through all its borders with sounds of glorious triumph!"

He then stated that he had discovered in his wanderings a mighty meadow where Behemoth was wont to pasture; and that if they would choose a delegation to visit it in company with himself, he would endeavor to point them to a sure and safe method of subduing the enemy.

At this suggestion the populace shouted loudly, and echoed the name of Bokulla with the most eager and fervent expressions of admiration. They readily appointed three eminent citizens to accompany him. The next



morning they set out, and having in due course of time reached the locality, they selected an elevation which commanded the whole prospect at once.

All admitted, as they looked upon the high walls that girt the broad and spacious meadow, and on the single narrow opening which led from the enclosure, that nature had furnished an extraordinary aid toward the capture of the invincible brute. Far around on both sides from the central position which they occupied, the stupendous upright battlement of mountains stretched—a peak here and there shooting up an immense tower, and a crag occasionally thrusting itself forth from the general mass of perpendicular rocks, like the quaint head of a beast, or the rugged and ugly features of a human being, as the fancy chose to give it shape and likeness. The whole hedged in a meadow covered with a fertile growth of tall, rich verdure—dotted by a few scattered trees—and intersected by a stream of considerable breadth and depth, which flowed through its centre, and formed an outlet in a narrow passage underneath the mountains. The natural opening leading from this broad enclosure, was about five hundred feet wide, and walled on either side by gigantic fragments of stone, from whose huge posterns it seemed as if in an earlier age of the world an immense gate may have swung and shut in captives of mighty size and fearful guilt. Nothing could be conceived a more secure and dreadful prison than these vast walls of rock: and no solitude could be more dreary than one thus fortified as it were by nature, and made sublimely desolate by barriers and enclosures like these.

All felt, thus gazing, the grandeur of the thought presented to their mind by Bokulla, and they turned and looked upon the countenance of the chieftain, as if they expected to discover there features more than human. Bokulla stood silent.

"The thought is mighty and worthy of Bokulla!" at length, exclaimed one of his companions, a man of generous and ardent heart; "here we triumph or the story of our life closes in endless defeat, and our fate makes us and ours perpetual bondmen."

"Who is it," interposed a second of less sanguine temper, "who is it that dare visit the panther in his den? or grasp the thunder from its cloud on the mountain-top?—It were as safe to climb into the eagle's nest as disturb this monstrous creature in his lair!"

"Terrible as the north when it lightens and is full of storms—inexorable as death, will be the encounter!" cried a supporter of the second speaker—"I would sooner plunge headlong from a tower, than venture within this guarded enclosure!"

"What say you, my friends!" cried Bokulla, springing to his feet, "what say you to an embassy to the brute on bended knee? I doubt not if we came as humble worshippers and supplicants, and consented to choose him as our na-

tional idol, he would abate something of his fierceness!"

"Now heaven and all good planets forbid!" cried his companions with one accord.

"Nothing better and nothing nobler, then, may be tried, than the great suggestion of Bokulla!" said the first speaker. "Here let us wrestle with fate and die, then, if die we must, in this broad and open arena, where the heavens themselves, and the inexorable stars, shall be witnesses of our struggle!"

Taking up their position on an elevated rock, shaded by trees which overlooked the whole scene, they consulted as to the most proper and speedy method of accomplishing their purpose.

After a consultation of several hours, during which the sun had fallen far in the west, and after weighing anxiously every circumstance that could have bearing or influence on the event, they determined in their open council-chamber, amid the solemn silence of the wilderness, that an attempt must be made to imprison Behemoth in the vast, natural dungeon at their feet, by building a stout wall across its present opening.

And furthermore, that it would be matter of afterthought to decide, if successful in the first, by what means his death was to be wrought. Their resolves had scarcely taken this shape, when a heavy shadow fell suddenly in their midst, as if a thick cloud had covered the sun; and looking forth for its source, they beheld Behemoth walking silently and ponderously along the ridge of the opposite mountains. They arrested their deliberations, and rising in a body, watched the progress and actions of the brute. In a short time he descended from the summit, and attaining its foot by a sloping and broad path, in a moment presented himself at the gap, which conducted into the mountainous amphitheatre. Stalking through, he advanced to its far extremity, and stretching himself on the bank of the stream, and in the cool shadow of the mountains, he prepared for repose.

His companions had already learned from Bokulla, that the Mastodon was in the habit of paying long periodical visits to this place, and of feeding, for considerable periods of time, on its abundant and savory verdure. Nothing could have been more opportune to their consultation than the arrival of Behemoth. His sudden coming was an argument for activity and despatch.

The fifth day from this, the Mound-builders arrived in considerable numbers, in a wood near the amphitheatre, bringing with them in wagons the tools and implements required in the proposed labor. They immediately set about the task, and commenced hewing large blocks of stone and dragging them to the mouth of the gap, but not so near as to obstruct it. The whole body of workmen that had come from the Mound-builders' villages had labored at this task for a week, and they found that in that time sufficient stone had been hewn to build the wall from base to summit. Each



block was more than twelve feet square, and through its centre was drilled a hole of some six inches diameter, in which to insert bars of metal, to bind them more firmly together.

As soon as they were prepared to commence the erection of the wall, which was the most critical part of their labors, four or five separate bands of musicians were stationed at the farther end of the enclosure, and near to Behemoth: for they knew, from Bokulla's report, that the Mastodon, mighty and terrible as he was, could be soothed by the influence of music, adroitly managed.

The moment the work of heaving the vast square blocks one upon the other began, the musicians, at a given signal, commenced playing, and during the progress of the labor, ran through all the variety of gentle tunes: so that the wall, like that of Amphion, sprang up under the spell of music. So cunningly did the different bands master their instruments, that, at three different times, when the Mastodon had turned his step toward the gap at which the Mound-builders labored, they lured him back, and held him spell-bound and motionless.

The blocks were hoisted to their places by cranes, and the utmost silence was observed in every movement; not even a voice was lifted to command, but every direction was given with the pointed finger. No one moved from his station during the hours of toil, but each stood on his post and executed his portion of the task like a part of the machinery. And yet there was no lack of spirit; every one labored as if for his own individual redemption, and one who beheld them plying amid the massive fragments of granite, silent and busy, might have thought that they were some rebellious crew of beings brought into the wilderness by a genius or necromancer, and there compelled, speechless and uncomplaining, to do his bidding.

They labored in this way for more than a month, and at the end of that time, Bokulla proclaimed from its summit that the wall was completed. At the announcement, the whole host of artisans and laborers, and innumerable women and children, who had come from the villages, sent up a shout that rent the air. Behemoth heard it, and, listening only for a moment, browsed on among the tall grass as if regardless of its source and its object. In a few days, however, after the music had ceased its gentle influence, and the supply of pasture began to be less luxuriant, the Mastodon made progress toward the old outlet, with the determination of seeking food elsewhere.

He, of course, sought an outlet in vain, and found himself standing at the base of an immense rampart, which shot sheer up two hundred and fifty feet in air. He surveyed the structure, and soon discovered that it was no trifling barrier, but a mighty pile of rocks, that showed themselves almost as massive and firm as the mountains which they bound together. At first, Behemoth thought, although it would be idle to attempt to shake the whole mass at

once, that yet the separate parts might be removed block by block. With this purpose he endeavored to force his white tusks between them, but it was in vain; they were knit too firmly together to be sundered. At length, the great brute was maddened by these fruitless efforts, and retreating several hundred rods, he rushed against the wall with tremendous strength and fury.

The Mound-builders, who overlooked the structure, trembled for its safety, but it stood stiff, and the shock caused Behemoth to recoil discomfited, while the earth shook with the weight and violence of the motion. Over and over again these assaults were repeated, always with the same result. Wearied with the attempt, the Mastodon desisted, and returned to feed upon the diminished pasturage, which he had before deserted. He had soon browsed on it to its very roots, and began to feed on the commoner grass and weeds, scarcely palatable. In a day these had all vanished, and he turned to the trees which were here and there scattered over the meadow. These he devoured, foliage, limb, and trunk.—In a few days they were wholly exhausted, and the enclosed plain was reduced to a desert—pastureless, herbless, and treeless.

The impatience and wrath of Behemoth now knew no bounds. He saw no possible mode of escape from this dreary and foodless waste. Around and around the firm colosseum which enclosed him, he rushed, maddened, bellowing, and foaming.

At times, in his fury, he pushed up the almost perpendicular sides of the mountains and recoiled, bringing with him shattered fragments of rock and large masses of earth, with fearful force and swiftness. Around and around he again galloped and trampled, shaking the very mountains with his ponderous motions, and filling their whole circuit with his terrible howlings and cries. The Mound-builders who stood upon the wall, and on different parts of the mountains, shrunk back affrighted and awestricken before the deadly glare of his eye, and the fearful and agonizing sound of his voice.

Day by day he became more furious, and his roar assumed a more touching and dreadful sharpness. All sustenance was gone from the plain; the whole space within his reach furnished nothing but rocks and earth, for he had already drunk the stream dry to its channel.

The mighty brute was perishing of hunger in the centre of his prison.

His strength was now too far wasted to admit of the violent and gigantic efforts which he had at first made to escape from the famine-stricken enclosure, and he now stalked up and down its barren plain, uttering awful and heart-rending cries. Some of the Mound-builders who heard them, and who saw the agonies and sufferings of Behemoth, although he had been their most cruel enemy, could not refrain from tears. So universal is humanity in its scope, that it can feel for everything that has life.

Howling and stalking like a shadow, momentarily diminishing, he walked to and fro in this way for many days. Hunger hourly extended its mastery through his immense frame. At about midday in the third week of his imprisonment, he cast his eye upon the cavernous and dusty opening through which the river that watered the plain had been accustomed to find its way. It was broad and open and of considerable height. Into this Behemoth now turned his steps. Its mouth was larger than the inner passage, for time and tempest had worn away the rocks which once guarded it.

As he advanced it diminished, and ere his whole bulk had entered the channel, it became so narrow and confined that he was forced to sink on his knees, in order to make further progress. This labor soon proved vexatious and toilsome, and the Mastodon, willing to force a way where one was not to be found, or to perish in the endeavour, raised himself slowly toward an upright position.

The remnant of his strength proved to be fearful, for, as his broad shoulders pressed upon the rocks above him, the incumbent mountain trembled, and when he had attained his full stature by a last powerful effort, the impending rocks rolled back and forth, and fell with a resounding crash and in great fragments to the earth. The whole cone of the mountain had been loosened from its base, and, leaning for a moment, like a lurid cloud in midair, fell into the plain with terrible ruin, bearing down a whole forest of trees and the earth in which they had taken root.

Fortunately for Behemoth—unfortunately for the object of the Mound-builders—the rocks which immediately overhung Behemoth, though rent in several places, did not give way, but so interlocked and pressed against each other as to form a solid arch over his head and leave him unharmed amid the ruins. Passage through the channel was, however, wholly arrested by the large masses of earth that had fallen into it, and Behemoth, finding it vain to attempt to pass farther onward, withdrew.

The fatal time drew nearer and nearer. Hundreds and thousands of the Mound-builders gathered from every quarter of the empire to look upon the last hour of the mighty creature which lay extended, in his whole vast length, in the plain. A catastrophe and show like that was not to be foregone, for it might never (and so they prayed) come again. Death and the Mastodon held a fearful encounter in the arena below. Nations looked down from the wall and the mountains, on the strange and terrible spectacle.

To and fro the whole famished bulk moved with the convulsions, and spasms, and devouring agonies of hunger. At times the brute raised his large countenance toward heaven, and howled forth a cry which, it seemed, might bring down the gods to his succor.

On the fortieth day Behemoth died, and left his huge bones extended on the plain, like the wreck of some mighty ship, stranded there by a deluge, to moulder, century after century, to be scattered through a continent by a later convulsion, and, finally, to become the wonder of the present time!

THE END OF BEHEMOTH.



THE POLITICIANS:

A COMEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.



# THE POLITICIANS.

## PREFACE.

It scarcely befits the author of a comedy to meet his readers with a rueful visage, and to give them a prologue seasoned with as many hardships as there are pebbles in a pudding served at a country inn.

Were this his privilege, the present entertainer might spread one of the most delicate and delicious banquets of mishap that it has ever been the dolorous fortune of the reader to sit down to. First, we should have a little railing at the managers, the sworn foes to dramatic writers, who lie in wait, as is well known, behind the door of the green room, to knock the poor gentleman's brains out, without paying, as gentlemen should, for their sport. It would be impossible in this place too, to pass over a dissertation on the impertinence of producing, at an American theatre, a constant succession of farces with Sir Harry Humdrum, my Lord Noddy, and my Lady Highdiddleiddle, attended by flying squads of waiters in livery and coachmen in top-boots—to the entire exclusion of a single scene or personage that has the recommendation of fitness, either in respect to time, place, or audience. In fact, the author might safely dilate on the manifest injustice of not allowing a solitary devil of a poor republican to show his visnomy on the stage more than once in a quarter, and then, only with an English playwright at his back. That the Americans are a stolid, melancholy, long-visaged people, is quite evident from this—that they have not, up to this moment, furnished, as far as the present author is advised, material for the concoction of a single genuine and legitimate comedy.

The citizen who is employed in the manufacture of constables and aldermen by the year, governors bi-yearly, and presidents quadrennially, may be readily supposed to be too much engaged in this weighty business to find time for the contrivance of idle plays and poems; although he may be all the while furnishing very admirable material to such lookers-on as have leisure for sketching his worship in his hour of bustle and glory.

Besides this, a word should be said on the evident absurdity, on the part of our legislature, of enacting a law by which remuneration should be secured to such idle persons as spend their time in the writing of plays. The builder of a cotton umbrella, or the creator of a four-hooped tub, are objects sufficiently dignified for the regards of a senator or representative, because the one may secure the said senator or representative a dry scone in a shower, and the other a supply of jerked beef in an emergency:—but what claim, we beseech you, has a vagabond dramatist, who works in feelings, affections, mirths, and melancholies, upon these pluvius and hungry legislators?—They would as soon think of incorporating a guild of eagles to gaze upon the sun, as of bestowing a charter to think and write, upon the fraternity of dramatic

authors. Tariffs and immunities were invented by some fool of a man of genius for the benefit of clowns and calico-mongers, and not for his own kindred. To the red-coated invader of his country, the heroic statesman presents a gloomy-looking gun, and says, "One step—and you are a dead man!" Such is his respect for the land he lives in. To the foreign merchant, the prudent statesman extends a formidable, codified document, and exclaims, "Come this side of high-water mark, and it shall cost you twenty per cent. *ad valorem*!"

Such is his affection for the native-born gentleman who clothes his back in homespun. To the invading grain-dealer, the voracious statesman sends a furious inspector to say, "None of your musty wheat enters this market—we pray you mercy!" Such is his reverence for the home-constructed flour-mill that satisfies his belly. Thrice-honored Lycurgus—His back, his belly, and his birthplace, he nobly provides for; but his mind, the immortal, far-seeing, capacious soul—that's sheer stuff, impalpable, intangible, and invisible—and if it can't take care of itself, a week, feeble, rickety intellect it must be. A law to protect the mind from foreign corruptions, to secure to the homeborn offspring of that mind rights of remuneration and inheritance!—The sagacious and enlightened M. C. scorns such props and protections, as laws and enactments for the efforts of his own noble intellect. His speeches are spread over the face of the country in extra Globes and Intelligencers, and he receives eight dollars *per diem*: so what cares he for remuneration and copyright! Is not this sound, wholesome, and safe logic for a politician? For a politician, it is.—

Having thus suggested what, in a certain mood, he might have said, the author can not part from the reader without giving utterance to a few present feelings of a somewhat deeper cast.

In the present condition of things, a manager looks upon a manuscript American play, with, I imagine, about the same favor as he would peruse the wash-book of one of his supernumeraries, and would as soon think, under ordinary circumstances, of putting the last year's almanac into action, with the twelve signs of the zodiac as *dramatis persone* (which would in fact make a very pretty spectacle), as of producing a comedy by a dramatic writer born this side of Cape Lookout. An American dramatist is at once confronted and frowned back by a cheap array of sturdy strangers, in the guise of farce, burlesque, and comedy, from abroad, that have usurped exclusive authority even in his chosen places of amusement. A spirit alien to anything that may be found in his homeborn compositions, starts up and warns him from the spot, with maledictions on the unlucky head that has ventured to conceive scenes of native humor, or to delineate Five Acts of the life which his simple-witted countrymen are content to live.

The author of the following work, in the spirit

of a liberal self-reliance, has at all times entertained the belief that America contains within itself material quite adequate for any class of literary productions which might be demanded by the public taste. Auspicious nature has, in this land, denied us no product that is necessary to sustain, cheer, and embellish human life: her foundations here are broad, and deeply set, and her airy summits are gilded with the lighter graces and ornaments of natural architecture. Rolling rivers, green dark woods, boundless meadows, and majestic peaks, labor together to complete the beauty and nobleness of its outward aspect. Within the mind of man there is, there must be, unless humanity is false to its trust, something that replies to these. Some spirit of beauty and truth must haunt us in our walks through scenes like these, and awaken the soul to action and utterance not unworthy, at least, of its great inspiration. This is the divine origin, the Delian birthplace of poetic thought, and the poetic progeny can not fail to attain its true growth, if the atmosphere it is allowed to breathe be not chilled or rendered impure by an ungenial or unhealthy national taste. From this grand external world, co-operating with and inspiring an equally grand and elevated human spirit, must spring the loftier creations of dramatic art. —From another phase of things, the crowded life of cities, the customs, habitudes, and actions of men dwelling in contact, or falling off into peculiar and individual modes of conduct, amalgamated together into a close but motley society, with religions, trades, politics, professions, and pursuits, shooting athwart the whole living mass, and forming a web infinitely diversified; from this wonderful world of life and opinion, must grow the genial and brilliant representative of life and opinion, Comedy itself.

Comedy, it is true, requires something of costume, something of age and reverence to be laughed at, some settled and canonized absurdities to mock, in order to accomplish a portion of its labor. But, rooted and fixed in the very elements of human nature, are to be found the materials with which genuine comic genius seeks to deal; making use, however, of external aids of face, figure, dress, and action, as the exponents and betrayers of the spirit of folly or humor that lurks within. To say that there are no proper materials for comedy in our country and among ourselves, is to assert that so great a revolution has been wrought in human nature, that it has ceased to be itself.

In truth, with high and generous qualities which have carried us nobly through all past struggles of action, we have proved ourselves, I fear, greatly wanting in lofty and manly self-dependence, in all that relates to the nobler intellectual duties. A resolution to repudiate, without respect to foreign authority, whatever is really hostile to the true national spirit, and to give a welcome to whatever embodies or appeals to it (I mean in no false or grovelling sense), would go far toward achieving many of the benefits proposed by legislation and restriction. If we are but true to ourselves, no law, no state of things, can be false to us. We are first traitors to ourselves, and the law, as a matter of course, follows us as a deserter. We establish a league of disastrous amity with folly and injustice, and we soon find the camp in which we have taken shelter, though seemingly our country, a place in truth of alien and unhappy servitude. Let us have free thoughts and home thoughts, or let us cease to live!

It only remains for the author to dismiss the reader to the perusal of the following work—he

could have hoped with a more cheerful and less earnest welcome, but the full heart will have its way—with the declaration, that it will be a lifelong pleasure to him, if this humble dramatic attempt shall furnish the least countenance to the cause of a true National Literature!

NEW YORK, July, 1840.

## CHARACTERS.

BRISK—*Candidate for Alderman.*

CROWDER.

GUDGEON—*The rival Candidate.*

BOTCH.

GLIB.

OLD CRUMB.

BLANDING.

BILL BAFFIN.

TOM LUG.

JOE SURGE.

MRS. GUDGEON.

KATE BRISK.

*Citizens and others.*

SCENE—*New York.*

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*The open street.*

*Enter BRISK and CROWDER.*

BRISK.

Now for a capital stroke of policy, Crowder—we must get the use of the church bell.

CROWDER.

The very thought I had; we must be of the same sect of thinkers:—the very thought.

BRISK.

Yes, you can look through the thing. Many of the more quiet voters, being accustomed to its Sunday summons, would be brought out and would readily aid our ticket, if they understood the steeple, for the time, to be in the hands of our party. You see?

CROWDER.

Exactly so; and, with a banner displayed and our ticket spread on the weathercock, they could not fail to comprehend our views at a glance.

BRISK.

Particularly as the weathercock's a silver-side, with a gold ball in its mouth! But you



mentioned the porter-houses at the upper end of the ward?

CROWDER.

You must make a tour of them immediately. The best arrangement will be to brandy with those in Scammel street, and take your supper of cutlets and pale ale at Works's with his boarders—who, you know, are chiefly retired ragamuffins, disbanded street-sweepers, and almshouse candidates generally; a powerful class at the poll.

BRISK.

If that must be done, couldn't you get Tom Lug out of the way while I'm there? Pah! the thought of him makes me sick; a double-distilled scamp.

CROWDER.

With great influence, however, greater than the best citizen we have. I would not insure your election if Mr. Lug's feelings are ruffled in the slightest.

BRISK.

I must digest him then, with the coarse steaks, as if they were both as savory as grilled woodcocks—that's all. I only ask Heaven for a dry night, for he comes staggering in from a shower, with his drippings, soaked through and steaming like a swamp.

CROWDER.

But there are others whom you must know, and take by the hand, or they'll call you an aristocrat.

BRISK.

Oh! I must be spared that title. They may name me toad, snake, dog, monkey—but not aristocrat. If the popular nose snuff an aristocrat nine miles off, its delicacy is offended, and it veers instantly the other way—to catch the odor, more grateful to its organ, of gentle loaf-erism. Who are your other vagabonds?

CROWDER.

There's a short man with a large mouth and a scar on his cheek.

BRISK.

That's Joe Surge, by the token; as rough a Christian as ever came into the world, and whose character is as offensive as Tom Lug's person.

CROWDER.

But Joe carries a whole block with him, besides his river influence among the hard-drinking fishermen and ship-joiners.

BRISK.

Well, we must be charitable in our constructions; that gives me a different opinion of the

man—there are worse fellows than Joe Surge, I am satisfied. How about the revolutionary veteran? that's capital too good to be wasted.

CROWDER.

He deposits the first vote on our side, and we think of bandaging one of his legs and placing a patch over his eye, to make the spectacle more imposing.

BRISK.

If we could fix it to have his vote challenged by the other party it would tell amazingly in our favor, and we would get out a placard at once—"Disgraceful! an old soldier dishonored!" and so forth.

CROWDER.

It would afford a good opportunity to call our opponents ruffians, libellers, and miscreants—which should not be lost.

BRISK.

Couldn't we attach two or three cases of suicide to their neglect to clear the river? where-by, for example, many are prematurely smothered in the mud, that might otherwise have been saved by a drag-net!

CROWDER.

This would hardly do, simply, because no such case of devotion to water has occurred within the memory of man; but we might plausibly charge them with the death of the watchman that was moonstruck the other night, sleeping on Gudgeon's stoop. If Gudgeon had exercised ordinary benevolence and taken him in, in the early part of the evening, and kept him by the warm fire, and nourished him with hot toddy, it couldn't have happened—that every one must see.

BRISK.

Excellent—very excellent—but recollect, we must follow them up with charge on charge, accusation on accusation, till they are stunned like cattle, and drop astonished to the ground. You will be at my house in an hour, and examine my dress, to see if it's sufficiently rusty and plebeian to make me presentable at this court of loafers at Works's. [*Retiring.*]

And, I say, Crowder, if you have a coat out at the elbow a little, bring it around; my worst, I am afraid, is a month or so too much this side of shabbiness to be popular. [*Returns.*]

Bring your iron snuff-box, too, filled with Lorillard, and, hark you again, I must borrow that catskin cap of yours, that's moth-eaten—meantime, I'll let my beard grow. [*Exit BRISK.*]

Enter GLIB.

GLIB.

Well, Crowder, we are going to try another wrestling match with you, and if you achieve a fall I hope there will not be an earthquake.

CROWDER.

Oh, we promise there shall be no such thing provided you will pledge yourself to raise no hurricane harangues during the election; nor to strike down our tallest men with your tornadoes of speech and tempests of windy declamation. No noise, no corruption—that's our motto.

GLIB.

Sly, deep, and dangerous, like a wily river; that is the way you undermine what you wish to overthrow.

CROWDER.

You think that we manage it so, do you? we that are behind the scenes and in the secrets.

GLIB.

You behind the scenes! you in the secrets! Why, Crowder, you are one of those fellows, in every party, who are allowed to make a noise in proportion to their real want of confidence and information; in the same way as poor Bill Baffin, the stevedore, thumps and whistles and plies his mallet on the outside of the ship on the stocks, without getting so much as a peep in at the cabin-window.

CROWDER.

We are not hoodwinked so easily, my kind Gudgeonite! We don't allow ourselves to be mystified like your money-ridden citizens.

GLIB.

Oh no, you prefer to be mystified more after the manner of a cartman's horse, with his head in a feed-bag, who, if he can get a sufficiency of oats, doesn't mind how much he's in the dark.

CROWDER.

Darkness and light are the same to us, if we can but serve the interests of the people, and protect them from the fangs of knaves and intriguers. We could pass our lives in dens, dungeons, yea, even in stalls and stables.

GLIB.

With well-filled mangers and perpetual drippings from the public reservoir, to keep you in mind of your dear friends—the people! Roast beef is the altar on which you swear to sustain that cause; and, at whatever sacrifice of bread and beer, you will uphold it—while the supplies last! Eh!

CROWDER.

Glib, you loathe a poor man—I know you do—as if he were a monster. We love paupers—we have an affection for them, and mean to establish the city government on a pauper basis, as solid as the graywacke foundations of the island, for it is our honest belief that the deeper you go in the scale of society, the richer grows the soil.

GLIB.

And you poor gentlemen in office are the husbandmen that cultivate it; the tillers of this arable land of salary, perquisite and plunder.

CROWDER.

Sir, I'd have you know, with us no man's integrity is tampered with.

GLIB.

Who ever dreamed such an absurdity? You disdain a resort to such petty meanness—and, what with dinners, and contracts at high rates, and a privilege to dip fifty per cent. deep into the public pocket, a worthy man's virtue is no more exposed with you, than a sea-captain's wife whose husband has gone the Canton voyage.

CROWDER.

Mr. Glib, I must leave you—you are growing offensive. We will finish this discussion at the polls. *[Exit CROWDER.]*

GLIB.

Ha! ha! upon my soul I forgot that his own aunt had been tempted in this way, and that our little alderman would-be, Mr. Brisk, was the supposed serpent in the garden. Hereafter I must avoid such subjects—for to make virtue a topic with a professed politician is sure to give offence; and if one of these fellows gets by chance among the saints in the next world, he will be as much out of place as a painter in a mob.

## SCENE II.

*A room in Gudgeon's house.*

GUDGEON.

What a glorious thing it is to be a candidate for alderman! One wakes up in the morning, and the first thing he hears is some little politician under his window, shouting, hurrah for Gudgeon! and the young rascal, in his enthusiasm, throws his cap so high, the shadow in the dressing-glass almost makes me cut myself. Every spile becomes a speaker of his praises; every shutter swings open with a proclamation of his virtues; and there's not a dead wall in the ward that does not announce his glory in the largest capitals—nor a dumb hog's-head that is not vocal in approval of his nomination. I shall have another seal put to the bunch at the end of my watch-chain, that's flat, and I think I will have my calves padded. Robert Gudgeon, Esquire, Alderman! I'll get me a stamp cut, with a flock of goslings in the centre, to show that I was reared in the country and am not ashamed of my origin; and with this I'll mark all the corporation documents I can lay hold of!

*Enter BOTCH.*

BOTCH.

Have you heard this rumor, sir?

GUDGEON.

What rumor, for Heaven's sake? They haven't bought up all the large flags in the ward?

BOTCH.

No, sir.

GUDGEON.

Have they got in a new barrel of beer? or hired Blaster, the popular trumpeter? I spoke to him myself last night. They haven't engaged Murphy's two starved horses, that always operate so on the popular sympathies and bring up so many voters?

BOTCH.

None of these, sir!

GUDGEON.

What then, Botch? Be quick—what then?

BOTCH.

Why, sir, the Brisk party is going to use the belfry of the church to distribute tickets from, and they intend to employ the sexton to read prayers every morning of the election from the small window in the steeple.

GUDGEON.

This must be counteracted: it will have an overwhelming effect. We shall have the whole religious community moving against us in platoons, pew by pew!

BOTCH.

Something must be done, sir; I see clearly something must be done. What shall it be, sir?

GUDGEON.

Yes; something must be done.

BOTCH.

Certainly—something must be done.

GUDGEON.

What then, in the name of Heaven, shall it be?—Couldn't we get Glib to climb the steeple above the window and deliver an harangue? It might do away with the evil influence of the proceedings below, and give us a tremendous ascendancy at once.

BOTCH.

I doubt whether Mr. Glib would undertake it, even if he could snatch a notary's commission from the weathercock, as the chances of being made a martyr of by stoning would be considerable.

GUDGEON.

Can't you think of anything else, then, Botch?

BOTCH.

Why, yes, sir—a little suggestion strikes me. How would it do, if you were to be seen walking down the street by the poll, between two men drunk?

GUDGEON.

Arm-in-arm with two drunkards! What do you propose to gain by that?

BOTCH.

The finest series of popular effects ever produced. See, sir, how it operates! You in your new blue coat, sir, with bright buttons, clean ruffles, and well-polished boots—looking as handsome as Adam the day he was born—march along, with Adze the tipling cooper hanging on one arm, and Ike Luff, for instance, pulling at the other, and pitching about like a scow straining at her moorings. Everybody's attention is immediately directed to you. "Gudgeon is friendly to tavern-license—we'll vote for him," says a dealer in Hollands, "obvious from his respect for our customers."

GUDGEON.

That fixes the tavern-keepers and the tipplers; very well.

BOTCH.

"What a big-souled man Gudgeon is!" says a tailor. "He'll need a new coat every other week, when he's made alderman—He knows how to use a coat," as Ike Luff wipes his mouth on your shoulder.

GUDGEON.

That gives us the tailors and their journey-men, I suppose, and might have its effect with the cloth-dealers.

BOTCH.

Then the temperance people are yours to a man; for if you put your mouth cunningly to the ear of your side-champions, and lift up your fingers in a solemn manner, they will suppose you are warning the poor wretches to refrain from their cups; while the common mob will laugh, taking the whole spectacle for a very tolerable joke.

GUDGEON.

It shall be done, Botch; and to aid the effect, I'll have some tracts against drunkenness sticking from my coat pockets, while you can have a few large handbills, setting forth that I am in favor of retail liquor shops, posted against the opposite fence.

BOTCH.

In favor of retail liquor shops and the new water works?

GUDGEON.

No, not the new water works—you had better put that in a separate handbill by itself.  
[*Exeunt severally.*]

## SCENE III.

*An ante-chamber at Blanding's lodgings.*

OLD CRUMB.

Somehow this young man has touched me strangely. Ever since I heard him play those plaintive tunes, my heart has been with him: he is poor—a mere flute-player at the theatre—but I love him, for he reminds me of my own youth and of days long, long gone by. His musical and pathetic breath gives me back delicious moments, that are otherwise vanished for ever; sweet evenings, tranquil noonday hours, and long, long afternoons, when the sun set with a light that can never rise again. Child and changeling of poverty as he is, he can do more for this old wearied soul of mine, than any one beneath the degree of my Creator.—I hear him now—his door is ajar, and I will listen before I enter.

BLANDING. (*From within.*)

A city life, a city life for me—  
Far, far from the shade of the greenwood tree!  
The sights and sounds that stir the nimble brain

Beyond the speaking stream—the golden grain.  
The thundering shout of the gathering rout  
When the town goes mad and its wrath is out—  
Has more that fires the true red blood in me  
Than the crash of a forest in every tree.

The glorious light of the city night  
When the stars are quenched and the lamps  
burn bright—

Is better far, is better far to me  
Than the pale round moon and all her company.

CRUMB.

A lover, and not a word of his mistress in twelve lines of poetry!—I am afraid this is not the true lunacy.

BLANDING. (*From within.*)

Fol-la—my heart—andino—has gently—sa—  
felt—allegro—allegro—sweet Kate—piano—the  
sharp and sure revenge of fate—La-mi-fol-sa.

CRUMB.

The fit is coming upon him.

BLANDING.

*Oh smile upon the gloomy wave  
That bears me to a gloomier grave.*

That goes badly in andante—so—fa—me—fi—so.

CRUMB.

Its rising.

(*Tapping his forehead.*)

BLANDING.

*If sire or shackle bind your hand  
Break, break, oh break the cursed band!*

CRUMB.

He suggests elopement, on my word.

BLANDING.

*And fly—too slow—and fly—allegro—allegro,  
And fly with me. Prestissimo.*

CRUMB. (*Breaking in.*)

Heigh-ho! how is this, sir—are you trying to set a runaway match to music?

BLANDING.

I beg your pardon sir—but—

CRUMB.

You may well do that, and the pardon of the whole city council, if you please. Meditating a rhym'd elopement with Miss Brisk, daughter of John Brisk, candidate for alderman of the ward! Why this is an audacious breach of ordinance.

BLANDING.

I—I—beg to be excused, sir—but her name was not mentioned by me; it was a fancy piece that I was preparing for an opera.

CRUMB.

Yes, very pretty, and very fanciful, and would answer as well as another for an opera—if there were such a thing as an opera of real life. (*Mimics him.*) “Oh fate,” “sweet Kate”—“your hand,” and “break the cursed band.” I thought you had promised me you would not think of marriage, much less marriage with the heiress of an alderman, without my consent; and the first news I hear is, that that young scapegrace, Blanding, hath a snare set at the house of goodwife Gudgeon, for Miss Kate Brisk.

BLANDING.

To tell the truth, my kind friend, my calculations have been thwarted by an impudent, meddling, presumptuous hussy, who took the liberty to blot out all my resolves and put her own handwriting in their place.

CRUMB.

Now I'll warrant you will say this busybody was Nature, for we father on her all the children of our fancy, that good-sense, the rugged overseer, refuses to provide for. If a lawyer cozen a young orphan of his patrimony, people never think to lift their hands for a curse upon the dark rascal—for it's nature, nature! If a stout young fellow knock down a weak old man, and filch his purse and papers, the shrewd world exclaims—what could be more natural? Or if a sly young dog, like yourself, play the

incendiary with a pretty girl's heart, and set it all-a-blaze—oh! it's nature; if you have any fault to find, blame her.

BLANDING.

And if a kind old man takes an undeserving, thriftless young knave to his heart, as if he were his own child—whose folly is that?

CRUMB.

Mere whim—mere whim—the world says. But I thought you were not to be a rich man, that I might take my seat in the pit for this many a long year, and always hear you play those touching old tunes, which I am sure you will never play as well when you become rich.

BLANDING.

I shall lose none of my success on that score, for not a penny comes with Miss Brisk, unless she marries with her father's consent, and that never will come to me.

CRUMB.

Well, sir, I consider this a high misdemeanor—this falling in love against my will—a serious ground of displeasure; but—mark me—you shall have them both, the girl and the fortune, or I'm an old fool. Now play me "Oh, live again, sweet time of youth!"—(*Sits in an arm-chair, and weeps while Blanding plays.*)

I am an old fool, after all—an old fool!

[*Exit* CRUMB.]

BLANDING.

God bless the kind old man! His promise is as sure of ripening into performance (in this case I know not how) as the dawn of day into a true and glorious meridian. Of all the thousands that have heard me play, he is the single one in whom music, as far as I can learn, has performed its real office, of begetting generous thoughts and kindly actions. Kate! Kate!—thou art mine, for in this good man's promise I am no infidel.

[*Exit.*]

END OF ACT I.

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

*A room in Gudgeon's house.*

KATE BRISK and BLANDING.

KATE.

You say you love the city, and would always live within its bounds?

BLANDING.

I do, Kate, as dearly as a brown-thrasher loves the green tree that sheltered its young!

*Enter* MRS. GUDGEON.

MRS. GUDGEON.

Come, come, children, you have been long enough in the orchard—the paradise orchard, as I call it. When Robert courted me by the well, or the big walnut-tree in the lane, it was always "Margery, Margery, you are a while foddering the turkeys—is the Muscovy gander got among them agin, and troubling you?" from father's house. Or it would be, "Where are you? Robert—Rob—ert, I wish you'd pen that ewe, or stop that cackling hen!" or something of that sort from the stone house across the road, where Mr. Gudgeon's grandfather lived—(he was a sad old wag!) and then we'd flutter!—Come, come, your hourglass is fairly out, and I'm looking for Mr. Gudgeon home from the meeting every minute. But what's that you were saying about sheltering your young? Your pin-feathers grow fast!

BLANDING.

Not our own progeny, Mrs. Gudgeon—it was of young brown-thrashers, and not young Charleses or Kates. Our fancies are not quite so rapid travellers, are they, Kate?

KATE.

But, Blanding, there is no beauty and freshness in a city, I am sure, like that of the branching tree and the cloudless air—the spotted flower, and the sweet, silent nook, where the mower sits at noontide, belong not to the angry Babel that you love. What is there in a dull city to please the eye, brighten the fancy, or mend the heart?

MRS. GUDGEON.

Ah! I see, you are disputing the old question, whether you shall live in town or out of town; and, if you'll allow me to answer, Miss Kate, there's the parson and the moral reform—to mend the heart; the City hall and the old Bride-well, to please the eye; and, as to kindling up the fancy, I defy flesh to go beyond a hundred-dollar Cashmere shawl—in that particular. Besides, there's the privilege of having the street sprinkled twice a-week, that keeps the dust out of the parlor!

BLANDING.

Yes, and there are the fops, Mrs. Gudgeon, and rogues, sharpers, and money-lenders—all the proper children of the city.

MRS. GUDGEON.

And a very precious family it makes!

BLANDING.

Here I take my seat quietly by the wayside, under the shelter of fresh and pleasant thoughts, and look forth upon the little, busy, knavish world, and see it bustling and hurrying and fretting itself like a great schoolboy behind his time, and filling its huge green satchel with all

kinds of fruitless rubbish, and teasing its heart with thoughts of yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow.

KATE.

But these thoughts may be had in green fields as well as in crowded streets.

BLANDING.

They may—but there they come to us only like the sound of far-off bells, at intervals; here the mighty hum of life continually tolls us on to musings and meditations like these. Here every man's face is the frontispiece to a history.

KATE.

Yes, and to a very dull one, often.

BLANDING.

The features I speak of need no interpreter, but are of themselves loud as an organ, in expounding their own significance or insignificance, as it may happen. There is, for example Botch, Mr. Gudgeon's assistant in the present election—a character as impossible, in the country, as a three-story house or a roaring demagogue. He must have a hand in everything that happens in the city. If a murder occurs, he runs and takes minutes for his own satisfaction; he writes paragraphs for the newspapers, about street-nuisances, the navy-yard, and city finances; and signs the "Old Tar," "Argus," and "One that knows." If he hears a call to organize a new party, he is on the spot to act as secretary. In a word, he's everywhere and everything, and yet he remains the same credulous little creature that the Lord made him at first—in spite of his scribbings, juntos, and secretaryships.

KATE.

And I think he is the person that got an innocent butcher hanged, by introducing at court a memorandum which he had taken from the hat of the accused, at the time of the fray, of a method of slaughtering a bullock, instead of his proper notes of the homicide.

BLANDING.

Although he was a bosom-friend of the prisoner, and had boasted out of doors he could and would save his life with a word, as easily as hem-stitch a navy-jacket!

KATE.

That's a city character, and no other place on the earth could confuse a man's brains to such a pass as to have his friend hanged, by way of saving his life.

BLANDING.

Then we have politicians quarrelling who shall be crowned with most dust and honor; packet-captains contending which shall run the

closest chance of shipwreck, that he may soonest make a jeweller's shop of his parlor with presentation-pitchers, mugs, and goblets; men, monkeys, and monsters, sent as representatives from the four quarters of the globe; a snug berth in a belfry, with the power to enjoy all these, makes an illustrated book of life, where joy and sorrow, power, pomp, death, and laughter, pass us in a perpetual pageant. Oh! how dull—how tomb-like dull, are your fields and turnpikes, compared with this!—dull, Kate, as the very inhabitants themselves, that talk from October to August of the last camp-meeting or the next new-moon.

KATE.

Well, Blanding, you are the better pleader, and all I can say is, that your cause requires your ingenuity, but the country still has charms, honest hearts, cheerful faces, simple manners.

BLANDING.

Faces uniform as sheep, and one everlasting pair of linsey-woolsey pantaloons. The manners are simple enough, for there the three acts of man's life are, to cut hay in summer, fodder his cattle in winter, and attend a town-meeting in spring, to elect overseers of the poor. The poor!—they are all poor in spirit, if not in pocket, and deserve nothing better to look out upon than one huge, green page, with a half-dozen dreary-looking trees, by way of interjections!

MRS. GUDGEON.

There, go—go, children—I hear Mr. Gudgeon's hem down the street; I'm sure it's his, for he has a hem of his own, like our preacher. Kate, this way—Mr. Blanding, that, if you please, for you mustn't be seen in the street any nearer together than the two sides of a pond, or my character's ruined, and Mr. Gudgeon would, as like as not, lose his election.

[*Exeunt, BLANDING and KATE, severally.*]

*Enter MR. GUDGEON.*

GUDGEON.

Well—well—I am satisfied, this is certainly the proudest hour of my life.

MRS. GUDGEON.

What now! what now!

GUDGEON.

You may well ask what now—it will astonish you, woman. Go up stairs and get your best cap on, and I'll tell you.

[*Mrs. Gudgeon retires and returns.*]

MRS. GUDGEON.

Well, now, Mr. Gudgeon, (I'm afraid to call him Robert, he looks so grand—*aside*.) don't overwhelm a body.

GUDGEON.

No—I'll not overwhelm you, but I'll astonish you furiously.—they have appointed a committee to have my portrait taken!

MRS. GUDGEON.

Your own portrait?

GUDGEON.

Yes, my own portrait, of my individual self—Robert Gudgeon.

MRS. GUDGEON.

And what's to be done with it?

GUDGEON.

What do you suppose is to be done with it—give it to you for a fire-screen, or use it to wrap cheese in? Eh! No, it goes into the great hall, where we hold our meetings, and it only costs me fifty dollars.

MRS. GUDGEON.

Dog-cheap—but do you pay for it yourself?

GUDGEON.

Not altogether—but I headed the subscription-list in gallant style, and they were all so well-pleased with my promptness, they laughed outright with joy. That must be a thorn in Brisk's side. How do you think the election's going now, Mag? Am I safe, do you think—quite safe—

MRS. GUDGEON.

I hope so—I truly hope so; and, to make a short matter of it, I have felt a sort of presentiment that it must be.

GUDGEON.

And so have I. Some great event is clearly at hand. We have had a meteor the other night, that whizzed round the sky like a large Catherine-wheel—then there has been a school of sixty whale cast ashore off Barnegat—and the rain-king, only last week, caught a storm on a lightning-rod, and held it there two days, notwithstanding the entreaties of the neighboring county that was suffering sorely under a drought.—What do these things mean? what do they refer to? The approach of the comet, foretold in the Farmer's almanac—or—it may be so—(for I recollect the birth of my father's five-legged calf, in Danbury, was brought on by an early sunrise)—the election of Robert Gudgeon as alderman. I think I shall sleep sound to-night, unless disturbed by that vexatious dream again.

MRS. GUDGEON.

That dream, if it's the same you told me of, is lucky. If it comes to you again, encourage it—give it welcome, and, in order to provide a substantial welcome for it, you had better finish the cold turkey and the other half of the goose-pie before you retire. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*An apartment in BRISK's house.*

OLD CRUMB and BRISK.

OLD CRUMB.

Perhaps the young man is my equal or yours, sir!

BRISK.

My equal! Sir, he is a paltry flute-player at the theatre—a twelve shilling a-week whistler and inspirer of dead wood!

CRUMB.

But he is a man. (*In an under-tone.*) I will strive to restrain myself, although human patience is a frail thing.

BRISK.

A man, not he; I will warrant, now, though I have never seen his person, he is a tall, lank, thin-chopped fellow, that hath blown his brains out with his flageolet, as effectually as if he had applied a pistol to his scull.

CRUMB.

You are exceedingly happy in your illustrations. (*Under-tone.*) I rise fast—I am already at blood-heat.

BRISK.

That he goes simpering about like a feeble oysterman, sliding out his quavers and crotchets, and tapping on tables and hat-crowns with his fingers by way of rehearsing his next new part, and saving the wear and tear of instruments.

CRUMB.

Well, sir! (*Under-tone.*) Summer is coming upon me swiftly.

BRISK.

And when he talks to you, he drops his breath and sighs, as if it were a pity to rob his dog's-pipe, the flute, of so much good inspiration. Now of what use can such a fellow make himself as my son-in-law? Can he control twelve votes? Would a bill-sticker, or even the distributor of a quack-doctor's puffs, change his mind to please this upstart?

CRUMB.

Now hear me, sir! (*Under-tone.*) I am in the torrid zone; I burn.

BRISK.

You show me no consideration:

CRUMB.

You deserve none—

BRISK.

No equivalent:

CRUMB.

As for that, I'll furnish you forthwith. This abused young gentleman, then, sir, is an honest man, in my poor judgment, than your vile office-seeker, who glides about before he has been rewarded; from porter-house to porter-house, like a collector of tavern-rates; haunts barbers' shops, as if he were a wig-block; plants himself on corners and kerbstones, as if he were fixed there to supply citizens with light at noon-day—and at length—

BRISK.

Yes, at length! What at length?

CRUMB.

When he is berthed in an office, the poor rascal's heaven, he fattens like a dull young bullock on grass wet with the precious night-dew; rents a whole pew on Sunday; allows his wife to keep two servants and to wear three-shilling calico. Pah! the fellow smells odious of tobacco!

BRISK.

With all this, sir, your Mr. Blanding, I repeat, is not my equal nor a proper suiter for my daughter. He is not in the same rank—in the same station with me.

CRUMB.

No—no. His station is at the zenith, where there is shining virtue, truth, integrity, honor; yours, in the nadir of the earth—the base, dull nadir, where knavery, fraud, cozenage, and double-dealing abide. He is a zodiac, a living zodiac of many manly qualities; you a mere wooden imitation, a hollow mockery of these true planets that govern man's life. He has not a mercenary particle of earth about him—

BRISK.

No, for I doubt if he is worth a shilling in the world.

CRUMB.

You, sir, since you have forced me to the truth, if coach-wheels were but spoked with gold, would be an active running-footman all your life, for the sake of enjoying the glitter.

BRISK.

A noble object, sir, in my view, a coach with pure golden wheels; at mid-day it could be seen a league off.

CRUMB.

He, sir, looks upon nature and society with the eye of truth and fancy—gathering out of them the true purposes of life, and food to feed those purposes; you, my most sagacious and supple sir, make a traffic in the credulity of the world, set your follies out for sale, call about you gaping chapmen, who are in the market for a ranting demagogue, in sound mouthing

condition and warranted kind in harness! In a word, he has a soul—because he is a man; you have none, because the cost of keeping is too high in these trying times!—So good-day to your aldermanship! [Exit CRUMB.]

BRISK.

Well, although I am somewhat astonished—this old Whirlwind may blow as much as he pleases, but he can not blow me out of my present opinion of this fellow, Blanding. Presumption! Brazen-faced hardihood! A paltry musician, without rank, fortune, or title, to lift his eyes upon my daughter! Why, if it were uttered in the open air at night, it would make the very man in the moon, who has outstared a thousand generations, blush deep scarlet. My equal! my superior!—I am, at least, good Master Crumb, the proprietor of my own house and controller of my daughter's motions; and if he crosses the threshold of the one, or gets within eyeshot of the other, why he's welcome to her hand, I'll assure him, and I'll lend him my ears to make a nice satchel of to carry his flute in! This is disposed of, and now I must dress for the supper. [Exit.]

## SCENE III.

*The kitchen of WORK's hotel.*

*A table spread, lights, &c.*

LANDLORD, TOM LUG, and others. *To them enters BRISK.*

LANDLORD.

Gentlemen, here's Mr. Brisk!

TOM LUG.

Where? where?—Three cheers for his excellency!

BRISK.

Ah, Thomas, it does me good to take you by the hand, you hearty old fellow—William—James—Surge, are you here, too? On my soul, it's as fine for the eye as a visit to the museum, to see so many honest friends gathered together. (*Aside*)—Kangaroos, monkeys, and odorous mummies are as pleasant!

TOM LUG.

How's Mrs. Brisk?

BRISK.

Dead these ten years, Tom.

TOM LUG.

Beg your pardon—then she's as dead as old Adam himself; but how's your daughter?

BRISK.

Well, I thank you, Thomas. How is your family, Mr. Surge?



SURGE. (*Laughing.*)

Your honor's jokin' with me now—now confess your honor—playing the crab, eh!—comin' the blind eel over us?—How's your family? now that's too good!

BRISK.

Well, *how* is your family?

LANDLORD.

You must excuse him from answering that question—any other, I have no doubt, he would with pleasure—but (*whispers*) he's been in the penitentiary ever since he was of marriageable age.

BRISK.

Oh! (*Aside*)—I thought as much; it's a disgrace to be born in the same century and on the same continent with such a fellow. He is enough to infect an entire hemisphere, like the plague.

LANDLORD.

Mr. Brisk, will you be good enough to take the head of the table, with the respects of the company?

BRISK.

No—no—you must excuse me, if you will; let one of these worthy gentlemen preside, if you please. (*Aside*)—And save me from neighborhood to Mr. Surge.

LANDLORD.

Well, Tom Lug, come this way. Here, put your face between these two bottles of porter, and keep your eye steadily on the water-cresses, and you may hold sober till we are through.

[*They take their places at the table.*]

TOM LUG.

Alderman, what do you think of this alstockincy that's agin us at the Polls?—They say I aint fit to be governor of the state, because I'm out at elbows, and have had a little quarrel with the haberdasher and his second cousin, the hosier. Haven't I seen figureheads of Romans and other gentlemen in the bows of as big ships as ever floated out of this port? and wasn't they naked, excepting a little roll of linen over their breasts, and a sprig of poplar in their hand?

BRISK.

You not fit for governor! that's a pretty joke. You are fit for anything. (*Aside*)—Among others, from a peculiar conformation of neck, for the gallows.—The man that says a pauper—yea, a vagabond, Tom—is not suitable to hold the highest dignities in the gift of the people, is a traitor and a scoundrel.

TOM LUG.

That's a noble sentiment—a high-minded

I

sentiment. Let's have his health—Gem'men, the health of our next alderman, Mr. John Brisk. Drunk standing, boys. [*They drink it.*]

BRISK. (*Rising.*)

In return, gentlemen, for this flattering toast, let me offer you, "The ragamuffins and paupers of the ward: they conceal more genuine honor and virtue beneath their rags, than King Solomon in his Sunday clothes, or a Fourth-of-July orator in his new-bought ruffle and wristbands!"

SURGE. (*Maudlin drunk.*)

They call me names, alderman—they abuse poor Joe Surge—and one of the Gudgeon gen-try called me a tadpole. [*Weeps.*]

BRISK.

Why did he call you tadpole, Joseph?

SURGE.

Because—because—your honor, I haven't had—a clean shirt on these three year. Tad poles lives in mud, your honor knows.

BRISK.

And what do they call you, Tom?

TOM LUG.

Why, your honor, one of the canvassers re- turns me as a resident turtle!

BRISK.

How is that?

TOM LUG.

'Cause I never comes out of this old cordu- roy jacket of mine.

BRISK.

What name have these worthy gentlemen? I suppose you are all christened.

TOM LUG.

These are the men in the moon, because they always have dirty faces.—Now, alderman, give us a song for answering all these ques- tions.

BRISK.

One more—Has your worthy landlord no title?

COOK. (*Speaks up.*)

Yes, an it please Alderman Brisk, your honor —we call him the chimblly-swallow, for he's for everlasting poking about the hearth and smelling the smoke and the dishes.

TOM LUG

Now for the song!

ALL.

Yes, now for the song!

BRISK.

How many stevedores and wharfingers do you know, Tom?

TOM LUG.

Let me see, there's Zeke Oakum, tarpaulin Tom—two; Bill Baffin; but poor Bill's deadly sick—I doubt whether he'll get up to vote; say a score and a half. But give us the song, if you please. (*Aside*)—Hark'e, my boys, if he doesn't come down with his song, we'll pitch our votes on the other side—that's all.

BRISK. (*Aside*.)

I hear that, and although I would as lief sing in a musty fish-keg, I must try it.

THE SONG.

Were mine a head as high as is the highest steeple,

A tongue as loud as its far-sounding bell,  
The one I would raise to the sky for the people—

The other would echo of tyrants the knell!  
(*Aside*)—*Oh, wouldn't I raise a devil of a yell!*

Were my arm but as long as the great Mississippi,

My bosom as broad as the Prairie-du-Chien,  
With the one, for their sake, how, ye tyrants!  
I'd whip ye,

And breast with the other your torrents of spleen!

(*Aside*)—*Blast my eyes! Jack Brisk, if I know what you mean!*

If my legs were as long as the tall Alleganies,  
Like Barclay, I'd walk the wide world round—about—

And rescue, wherever I found them, poor royalist zanies,

And put with my vigor their rulers to rout!  
(*Aside*)—*Don't, for Heaven's sake, gentlemen, make such a shout!*

Oh, give me a breast that expands like the ocean,

And eyes like the vigilant planets above,  
Then, oh then, to my heart I will hug with emotion

The people I smile on—the people I love!  
(*Aside*)—*Provided the perquisite pay, I approve.*

TOM LUG. (*Aside*.)

Now he must give us the hornpipe he danced at the fancy ball, with Aunt Peggy on his back. Cook will do for Aunt Peggy, if she brushes up a little.—Come, alderman, another favor to your constituents!

BRISK.

What's that, Tom? Anything you can ask—you know I am the servant of the people.

TOM LUG.

Nothing much: I'm a'most ashamed to ask

you, it's such a mere trifle.—Joe, you ask him, you ain't afraid of the penitentiary keepers. Why, Uncle Brisk, to make a plain story of it, you must give us your fancy-ball hornpipe around the table with cook on your back.

BRISK. (*Feigns sudden sickness.*)

Landlord, what have you put in these lobsters? They have made me sick as death—Give me fresh air—There, so; now lead me to the door: I shall be well in a minute.  
(*Is conducted to the door, and makes off.*)

TOM LUG.

What a kind good man Mr. Brisk is—he's broke his constitution working at dinners, and suppers, and cold collations for the people! That was a capital song, as good as the quainter himself could give us; but I'm afraid the idea of cook and he in a hornpipe was too much for his nerves! Any how, three cheers and our votes to a man for little Jack Brisk!

END OF ACT II.

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.

Gudgeon's house.

GUDGEON and GLIB.

GUDGEON.

I begin to feel the anxieties of a candidate. Last night I was harassed with a vision of six constables standing around me with staves, and with their hats in their hands, bowing to me—thus. After this, a fellow in a white apron came in with a large green turtle, which seemed to be lying on its back, and struggling with its hands and feet to turn itself over. I suppose the poor thing was troubled with indigestion.

GLIB.

You shouldn't give way to these feelings, Mr. Gudgeon: they will unman you before the election.

GUDGEON.

Not they! I was no more scared by the sight of the six constables and their staves, than if I had been an alderman all my life, or if they had been so many plain farmers, with ox-gads, viewing a prize-bullock, in my own native town of Danbury.

GLIB.

I think it would have a good effect to mention that in my address to the citizens at one of the meetings: they'll call you the fearless Gudgeon—What is your opinion, sir?

GUDGEON.

It might—yes, it might. Well, sir, you may try it—but not as if it came from me. You can state, for instance, that my man William overheard me talking in my sleep, as he came in for my boots this morning.

GLIB.

And the remark about the ox-gads?

GUDGEON.

You might add, that William thought I lay as proud and unconcerned as if the constables had been—had been—what would occur to him?—so many puffed bladders!

GLIB.

And you one of them.

GUDGEON.

And I one of them.

GLIB.

That will produce a sensation in the meeting!

GUDGEON.

Unquestionably—I expect it. Hadn't I better be present, so that they can come up and shake hands with me, after the allusion. I don't see how I can avoid it.

GLIB.

Perhaps it would be more proper for you to remain at home, looking out of a second story window to address the people, when, in their enthusiasm, they shall adjourn to meet in front of your house.—That's always a great stroke of policy, to make a speech to people in the streets, when the boys are hooting, and the carts rattling up and down, and the engines puffing by with trumpets!

GUDGEON.

But how will my voice answer? It's hardly a two-story voice.

GLIB.

Capitally, capitally: you have a good round bass, and if, when you see a ragged fellow shivering in the farthest edge of the crowd, with his hands in his pockets, you address your remarks to him, as if *you* were standing in a cold entry, and calling for your overcoat, you will succeed in making a happy effort of it.

GUDGEON.

With a nightcap on, as if I had rushed straight from my bed, to meet my constituents?

GLIB.

Without a nightcap. Positively without a nightcap—That is aristocratic; but you might,

if you choose, in your shirt sleeves—they are republican.

GUDGEON.

That's a mystery.

GLIB.

So it is—and so is the connection between democratical principles and threadbare indispenables;—but that's the ground on which they'll beat us, if any: Brisk dresses shabbier than you.

GUDGEON.

But then consider, my dear sir, Brisk hasn't my form, arm, leg, my back and bust.

GLIB.

Allow me to suggest, sir, that during an election, we none of us have backs or busts to be thought of. I entreat you, as I have before, to abandon these fancies: I ask it as the greatest favor you can confer on me, on your party, on the community, to put on corduroys at least, my own wishes are for fustian, during the contest. Wear a pea-jacket with a few rents in it, and an appearance of being soiled with cigar smoke and tar.

GUDGEON.

I will do my uttermost.

GLIB.

And I think you had better send your coach into the country, darken your astral lamp, and take down your damask curtains.

GUDGEON.

Well, sir,—I will consider of it. In the mean time, I trust you will exert yourself in your harangues at our public meetings. Ride high, sir—ride high. Express your willingness to die for your country—in the last—the deepest ditch—

GLIB.

I shall do my endeavor.

GUDGEON.

Sternly and fearlessly.

GLIB.

I will.

*Enter a Boy.*

BOY.

Tom Lug, sir, the bully's round the corner, and says he'll drop Mr. Glib, if he catches him, like a shot hawk—and he'll curry him, he says, like a bull's hide—and he'll skin him like a weasel!

GUDGEON.

This is unpleasant news.

GLIB.

I wonder if I could get out by the back fence, without being observed?—It's unpleasant to meet that man in the face, his breath smells so of brandy and oakum.

BOY.

There's nothing but a clothes-line and a cistern, sir, on the other side.

GLIB.

I'd rather run the risk of drowning and hanging combined, than encounter that barbarous fellow. *[Retiring.]*

GUDGEON.

I believe you address the proscribed lamp-lighters to-night? *[Calling after him.]*

GLIB.

The proscribed watchmen and lamplighters.

GUDGEON.

Give it to them vigorously, if you please.

GLIB.

I shall.

GUDGEON.

Don't spare words!

GLIB.

Depend upon me: I'll lay the dictionary waste! I'll ravage it! *[Exit GLIB.]*

## SCENE II.

*Blanding's Apartments.*

BLANDING.

My mistress might as well be at Nova Zembla or the North Pole, as far as I am concerned; she is as much to the cham of Tartary (now that I am forbidden her presence) as she is to me. Where is the difference, I would like to know, between a lady and a whale or a walrus, if one is not permitted to enjoy her society: to smile with her, muse, meditate, and talk.—Now if I were in the country, I should hang myself;—but the city, the glorious city, warms one's brain like a November sun, and sets it all in a ferment with contrivance and strategy—I am not to see Kate Brisk any more—ha! ran it so? at the penalty of a chastisement. Now see, Master Brisk, how soon your rod of chastisement turns into a serpent of revenge, and your bully is cozened by a gentler man in his wits. Here, ye old badges of obscurity, I throw ye off! I disdain the name and the vocation of Charles Blanding, and am, henceforth, at least to this threatening father, Mr. Jefferson Goss, grandnephew to the United States senator, by the mother's side—I think this weak fish will run into this net, and while he is floundering,

we will get far enough out at sea, I trust, to make a more certain cast. *[Exit.]*

## SCENE III.

*A public room.**The Committee and CROWDER.*

CROWDER.

I agree with you, as to the muscular arm on the banner, with a hammer aloft; I think the addition of a stout leg would be judicious: there are many cordwainers in the ward, that would be won over by the device. A stout leg in a neat pump, and no stocking, to show the calf distinctly. This will please the butchers too, who are proud of their legs.

FIRST COM. MAN.

The stout leg, then; shall it be set down?

ALL.

Agreed.

CROWDER.

But, mind me, mark it down to cost not more than one dollar and a half.

SECOND COM. MAN. *(Writing.)*

One stout leg, naked and in a pump, twelve shillings.

CROWDER.

We must be economical this campaign, for the freeholders begin to complain that the taxes of the party to meet the expenses of an election, are getting to be as bad as the plunderings of the corporation—What noise was that above?

FIRST COM. MAN.

I heard nothing.

CROWDER.

They say to run a sewer through a man's pocket and drain it to the last cent, is as bad as to cut a street through his domicile and leave him the rubbish to pay damages.

SECOND COM. MAN.

How, in the name of Heaven, can an election be conducted without money? Joe Surge must be hired to fight, and must be paid his fists' worth.—Tom Lug must make himself a nuisance, to keep decent voters of the other side back; and he must have a percentage on the disgust he excites. We must have Blaster to blow the trumpet and to brow-beat and be scurrilous when he's off duty, and I'm sure he should be handsomely remunerated for the use of his person. He works as cheap as any bully we ever had—besides the trumpeting.

CROWDER.

Very true—every word;—but we can diminish our committee expenses a little, at least, for the sake of appearances. We can smoke half a box and carry none away: we can leave the candle-ends for next evening, and not throw them at any clean person we may see passing in the street: a quart of beer a-piece should satisfy us, and we can be more strict with our landlord, and have him render a nightly account of charges. I hear that noise again—what can it be? Eaves-dropping?

FIRST COM. MAN.

I hear it this time—it's overhead.

SECOND COM. MAN.

Let's hunt the rascal, and if we capture him, we'll have a roasted goose to insert in the bill.  
[*The Committee go out and return.*]

CROWDER.

Strange—that we could find nothing, not so much as the tip of a nose or an ear to levy on; but a political spy during a warm election, shrinks like a plant in a tropical climate, and I believe could even hide himself in the knot of a pocket handkerchief, or the crack of a wain-scot.

SECOND COM. MAN.

I saw Botch in the shadow of a house over the way as we came in.

CROWDER.

When I sounded the chimney to ascertain if he might be ambushed there, I heard some frail thing crash, which might have been Botch's skull. It yielded like a hollow thing, whatever it was.—To avoid any further chance of listeners, let's call in the landlord's bill and adjourn till to-morrow.—Landlord! landlord!

LANDLORD. (*From without.*)

Coming!

CROWDER.

We want your bill. That will bring him up with it, short and quick.

LANDLORD. (*From without.*)

It's e'en a'most made out—only a few items to add.

*Enter LANDLORD.*

CROWDER.

Come, read it off, jolly Job Works, in a good clear half-price voice—by particulars, and it's cash on the nail.—Begin!

LANDLORD.

That I likes—"four sperm candle"—Nothing like the ready metal—"Two quarts beer, with snuffers."

CROWDER.

Well; he has a fine throat of his own—it smacks of the spigot.

LANDLORD.

Room-hire, cigars, and two julaps, with benches.

CROWDER.

Well.

LANDLORD.

A small pig with lemon.

CROWDER.

A pig with lemon!

LANDLORD.

Two plates pickled beans, two rolls twisted bread, and beer extra.

CROWDER.

Beans, bread, and beer!

LANDLORD.

Six lobster and two pound sage cheese: likewise a splendid pork pie made of chops.

CROWDER.

A splendid pork pie made of chops!

LANDLORD.

And a suet pudding.

CROWDER.

Nothing else?

LANDLORD.

Nothing else.

CROWDER.

We have seen none of these things. Have you? (*Turning to one Com. Man.*) Lobster and sage cheese—Have you? (*To another.*) Pig with lemon, bread, beans, and beer—pork pie, and suet pudding!

LANDLORD.

This may be as it may, Mr. Crowder; but you sent down for the things—

CROWDER.

Sent down for the things!

LANDLORD.

Yes, sir, in a very unpleasant, and, begging the committee gentlemen's pardon, a very uncivil way—you might have found a better messenger nor a stone bottle as big as my two fist.

CROWDER.

Ah! I begin to see how it is—that cursed experiment of mine.

LANDLORD.

Yes, sir, that experiment of yours—it came

bouncing down the chimney like mad, and first it strikes my cook, poor hunchback Jenny, in the small, or I should, say, in the big of the back, as she was stooping over a dish of prawns for Tom Lug.

FIRST COM. MAN.

Bad enough !

LANDLORD.

Yes, gentlemen, bad enough you may say, for, springing from Jenny's hump an it had been a horsehair cushion, away it flies on to the table where the alderman had been sitting just a minute before—it's a mortal mercy his life was spared—and smash, smash it goes, like artillery, till every living dish on the board was fragments and scatterings.

FIRST COM. MAN.

We must practise economy, Crowder.

SECOND COM. MAN.

We must be prudent this campaign, for the freeholders begin to complain—sewer through the pocket—segars and candle-ends, and we must be a little frugal in our beer.

CROWDER.

Mr. Works, you'll be good enough to charge your bill to the ward, as usual; and you'll oblige me by smothering this unhappy breakage under the general expenses.

#### SCENE IV.

*Crumb's house.*

OLD CRUMB and CITIZENS.

FIRST CITIZEN.

But, sir, it is the wish of a large body of the people of this ward, that you should become a candidate; they are tired of these squabbling office-seekers, and wish to have for their alderman, once more, a plain, honest citizen.

CRUMB.

I am plain, I know, and, I believe, honest; but I have no other claims for this honor. I have never harangued at public meetings, given charity at noonday, clutched the skirts of great men, sat on midnight caucuses, walked prominently in processions or at celebrations; nor have I been seen at public dinners, thundering out toasts and sentiments that sounded loud with patriotism and the name of the people. How can I be your candidate? You had better look elsewhere, the creature grows in every street.

FIRST CITIZEN.

You are a plain, true citizen, as we said before, and for that we choose you. We are satisfied with your private acts, your wayside

charities to the sick, the orphan, and the oppressed; some of us have seen you, in the storm and at the dead of night, performing your offices of kindness and humanity. The light of a single star upon a good deed, dear sir, is worth more than the blaze of the sun or the approval of a thousand eyes. We will take you as you are, and for what you are, if you will allow us.

CRUMB.

Give a moment, and I will answer you.

[*Citizens retire.*]

CRUMB.

I care not for the honor, that is certain; I have no private end to answer, that is certain; nor will it suit my habits to wrangle by the hour, or to sit at late feasts, where man shows but as a creature of one sense—mere appetite. Again, the city needs friends; her revenues are wasted, her foundations sapped with unthrift and neglect; an old man's voice may be listened to when younger tongues would sound idle; the grayhaired pilot may be heard and heeded, when he attests that the rock is at hand, and the ship fast foundering. Ah! another thought, deeper than all these, I will be the candidate!—the honest enthusiasm of the ward shall elect me—our Master Brisk's tone will change when I am in the council. He will seek my influence, and hope to get it, and, perchance, will yield to my old wish about Blanding and his daughter. That perchance—that happy, bright-omened perchance, fixes me. (*Aloud.*)—Gentlemen, come in!

*Enter CITIZENS.*

FIRST CITIZEN.

Your answer?

CRUMB.

I will act!

FIRST CITIZEN.

And so will we! We thank you sir, and when the sun rises on Thursday morning, read our thanks in our recorded voices. Good day, good sir.

CRUMB.

I bid you all, good men, good day. [*They retire.*] And an early sun thereafter shall shine upon a happy bride and groom, if old Zachary Crumb is a true man and an alderman!

#### SCENE V.

*An apartment in Brisk's house.*

BRISK, alone.—*Enter SERVANT.*

SERVANT.

A gentleman, with great black whiskers, is below, sir. He swells and ruffles an he were the governor's son.

BRISK.

Ask him up, immediately. [*Exit Servant.*] It's Jefferson Goss, from the description; my heart flutters like a young pigeon's. I am in the same house, under the same roof with the grand-nephew of a senator. I hear the creaking of his boots! Hark—he coughed! He is on the stairs. Was I entitled to expect this? What weight and character this will give to my canvass, that I have been closeted with a functionary's near relative! Besides, my daughter Kate, now that that fellow, Blanding, is out of the way—but I must be prepared to address him formally. [*Walks up and down reciting—*“Sir, it affords me much,” &c.—*When Blanding enters, advances, and addresses him:*]

*Enter BLANDING, as JEFFERSON GOSS.*

BRISK.

Sir, it affords me great happiness to see you—unmixed happiness. I will not disguise the pleasure it gives me to receive, under my humble roof, so near a connexion of so distinguished a character.

BLANDING.

(*Aside—*Now a little figurative impudence, for the great man's nephew—who may be supposed to have been reared in pot-houses at the capitol.) Sir, you do me proud! Proud, sir, as if I sat on Chimborazzo, with a bald eagle in my lap.

BRISK.

(*Aside—*what a ward-meeting orator he would make!) Be good enough to be seated—this way, sir, if you please, and condescend to partake of these humble viands.

BLANDING.

Thank you, sir, I will gorge.

BRISK.

(*Aside—*What a happy style of expression!) I keep this table spread for my friends during the election. You will find this beef's-tongue exceeding nice. It is sound policy, it strikes me, this of overpowering a man's understanding with detachments of roast-beef and blackberry-pudding.

BLANDING.

But don't you think it best to skirmish a little at first, about the outskirts, with bottled-ale and cogniac?

BRISK.

Decidedly, sir; this shakes the outer walls. Then you come up with your heavy troops, Turkey and the Porte, and in a few minutes you have possession of the man.

BLANDING.

Between ourselves, Brisk, this mutton of your's is d—d nice. It's almost as fine as I have ever known to be raised on the old senator's farm. Were these cranberries reared in the hothouse or in beds?

BRISK.

In beds, I think; they are Long island berries.

BLANDING.

They make an excellent sauce with woodcock—I believe this is woodcock.

BRISK.

Yes, sir, that is woodcock, and considered very choice; it's from the Jersey meadows. (*Aside—*the young man has a keen appetite—but what penetration, what insight he betrays in his dishes! the true senatorial blood. I have no doubt he'd appreciate Kate at once. I'll call her.) Kate! Daughter—

BLANDING.

I beg your pardon, sir, but I hope there are no ladies about the house—I'm excessively timid, timid as a—rhinoceros.

*Enter KATE BRISK.*

BRISK.

My daughter, sir; Kate, let me introduce you to Mr. Goss, the senator's nephew.

KATE.

(*Aside, not looking at him—*Some disgusting politician, no doubt, with his tariffs and currencies, high rates and low rates, and scurrilities both high and low.—I wish he would carry his conversation among the Hottentots and other heathen, rather than bring it into this house. (*Pouts.*)

BRISK.

Kate, will you be good enough to observe—it's Mr. Goss, Mr. Jefferson Goss.

BLANDING. (*Aside.*)

I can advise her better who it is. (*Hums a tune in a low voice.*)

KATE.

(*Looking at him—aside—*As I live, it's Charles Blanding.—Ah, I understand the knave! (*Aloud, and in a different tone—*Good evening, Mr. Goss—you are welcome. What is the pleasant news, sir?

BRISK. (*Aside.*)

I knew she must change her line of behavior, the moment she obtained a glimpse of his fine person!

BLANDING.

Nothing, madam, stranger or pleasanter, than that a soland goose was seen crossing the sound yesterday in pursuit of an eagle who fled—

KATE.

This way—nearer, if you please, sir—and give me the nicer particulars of this singular history. *[Draws him apart.]*

BLANDING.

The eagle fled, Kate, till he got as near heaven as he thought proper, when he turned and struck his talons into the thin pate of the stupid bird, and it fell out of the sky, a leaden fool, as it was. *(Aside)*—This way, further.

KATE.

Oh the assurance of the thing called man! How could you venture to practise in this way on my good father.

BLANDING.

Venture, Kate! there is no venture in it: he expends his industry in contriving bars to his garden; I employ my agility in leaping them; and the mutual operation is aided by our being cits and strangers.

KATE.

How will you make that appear?

BLANDING.

Easily. Now, if we had lived in your favorite rural vicinity, where every boor and ploughman is classed in the memory of his neighborhood, like so many bugs and beetles in the Linnean system, I might have as well attempted to borrow your father's head of hair, with his eyes open, for a fancy wig, as to get access to you without his knowledge.

KATE.

Then you ride your old packsaddle, the city, still; making that a carry-all for your tricks and stratagems, your knavish doings and impudent disguises.

BLANDING.

In truth, I do: and now confess, Kate, that the town is the place for lovers—their true and natural hive.

KATE.

What they lose in simplicity, is not—

BLANDING.

Is gained in quickness of wit and variety of expedients for their mutual enjoyment: the lecture to be criticised; the mountebank to be stared at; the theatre to be dazzled with; the concert of sweet sounds heard together.

KATE.

Ah, if you knew my honest father's preju-

dices just now against sweet sounds, you would scarcely venture to remain here, even in your disguise. His prejudices show themselves dreadfully.

BRISK. *(Aside.)*

Love at first sight, I verily believe. They are already as intimate as a pair of assembly men. Just what I could desire.

BLANDING.

Dreadfully:—see what faces he is making at me this very minute! But in what ways, I pray? A politician that takes all the world to his bosom, should scarcely have prejudices.

KATE.

From his sudden horror of your occupation, he has sold my piano to a lady going into the country, at half price.

BLANDING.

Well.

KATE.

He has had lids put upon all the key-holes, because they whistle.

BLANDING.

Well.

KATE.

And the chimney pots taken down, because they sing.

BLANDING.

And further?

KATE.

He has sacrificed the old tortoiseshell cat, because he was told her purr was a musical concord in A.

BLANDING.

What a passion for music the pleasant old gentleman must enjoy! Shades of Bethooven and Mozart, look upon the melodious old creature kindly!—I should like to have his opinion of the disputed solo in Handel's Creation. *[Takes his flute from his pocket and sounds a stave.]*

BRISK. *(Rushing forward.)*

Good God! did you hear that, Kate? Did you, Mr. Goss?—The sound of a flute; there must be incendiaries about the house. After all the pains I have taken to escape that odious player—to shut him from my ears and my house—I am afraid he has obtained an entrance—It seemed as if he was in this very room.—Let's search every nook, corner, and cranny. Be good enough to assist us, Mr. Goss; for this is really a serious matter. *[They search under chairs, behind paintings, &c.]*



—Why, sir, the trouble I have taken to silence that fellow and his cursed serenading flute, is really astonishing. Sir, (*panting*) I have planted two approved bull-dogs in my yard; I have employed a private watchman, with a club of double the ordinary dimensions in front; I have had a vacant ground to the northeast, in which he practised his discordant stick, declared a nuisance by the corporation; and, moreover, I have ordered my servants, sir, if they detected a squinting, limping, awkward fellow, loitering about the house, to assail him from the upper stories, without remorse, with such vessels as might be at hand.

BLANDING.

Why, sir, your benevolence is unbounded, for you have offered him every variety of death—drowning, throttling, and knocking in the head. An ungracious scamp he must be, if he doesn't accept your kindness in one shape or the other; an ungrateful, pudding-headed villain!

BRISK.

Extermination is the best he deserves: if I had my way, I would annihilate the brood, and make room for men of merit, like yourself, Mr. Goss.

BLANDING.

The devil blast my stars, but you flatter me, Mr. Brisk, beyond my merits, entirely beyond my merits. But I must bid you good day, Mr. Brisk—good day, sir—I shall be with you early again. Good day, Miss Brisk.

[Exit BLANDING.]

BRISK.

A charming young man!

KATE. (*Dubiously.*)

Charming indeed!

BRISK.

What a contrast to that odious Blanding! You must confess a vast distance between the two.

KATE.

It's too palpable, sir.

BRISK.

Do you think you could love him, Kate?

KATE.

I think I might, if I had time. I am not sure.

BRISK.

Well, Kate, strive hard: turn your thoughts diligently that way—and perhaps I will forgive the old offence; perhaps—recollect!

END OF ACT III.

## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.

*The open street.*KATE BRISK and MRS. GUDGEON, *meeting.*

MRS. GUDGEON.

Well, Kate, poultry flies high in the market, this morning, and eggs are only four to the dozen. I really believe the times have reached our roosts and henhouses, and that hens and turkeys have become so dissolute and idle, with long holding of warm nests and abundance of good feeding, that they care not a straw for the public interest! However, this is a large-built and fine-looking pullet that I have bought, and if it makes the dish it ought to make, we shall know what's what in three days from this time.

KATE.

It's certainly a noble bird; and these pigeons' eggs, where did you purchase them?

MRS. GUDGEON.

From my old one-and-elevenpence, the fat huckster, who says that twelve pigeons' eggs, made into an omelet with four strips of bacon, bring health and luck to the man that eats them: what will Mr. Robert Gudgeon say to that? Here's a sheep's gizzard, too, to be taken at ten o'clock in the evening, made into a pie.

KATE.

What is that for?

MRS. GUDGEON.

To make Mr. Gudgeon amiable during the election. And here are two peacock's feathers to lay under his pillow to make him dignified. The boy is coming on with two rounds of beef and a dozen strings of Bolognas to feed his friends with, to keep them in good humor; and I've told him to buy some fresh chickweed and goosegrass to carry in his pocket; they say it draws voters—at least, Charles Blanding told me so. Poor boy! I'm afraid you'll see him no more, Kate.

KATE.

No more, Mrs. Gudgeon! Well, I shall preserve my senses, I hope, if I do not, now that I have seen Mr. Goss. Sweet, sweet young man!

MRS. GUDGEON.

Who is he? Who is this Mr. Goss?

KATE.

This Mr. Goss—Mrs. Gudgeon, I am astonished—Mr. Jefferson Goss, the grand-nephew of the senator.

MRS. GUDGEON.

What look has this young man? I think I know the Gosses.

KATE.

Firstly, a blue, smiling eye.

MRS. GUDGEON.

Well, all young men have smiling eyes.

KATE.

Arched brows, hair, auburn and gentle, with the light glancing from it every way.

MRS. GUDGEON.

His nose?

KATE.

Straight and spirited—a pale, thoughtful cheek, and a sweet chin, with a mole on it. (*Aside*—The foolish old owl! she must know it's Charles.)

MRS. GUDGEON.

I'll warrant by that mark and my sunflower-coverlid, he belongs to the Gosses of Cross river. Auburn hair, you said.

KATE.

Yes.

MRS. GUDGEON.

And a mole on his chin?—I know the Gosses as if they were blood-relations—what is the young man's gait and aspect?

KATE.

Gentle—and he sometimes looks up and sometimes down.

MRS. GUDGEON.

The very marks! And his height?

KATE.

Middling, you might say, neither tall nor short.

MRS. GUDGEON.

True, again. There can be no doubt he is one of the Cross river Gosses. But you have not given him your heart, Kate, as you seem to say by sighing?

KATE.

I must confess a partiality, Mrs. Gudgeon.

MRS. GUDGEON.

What! and desert Charles Blanding, for this fellow?

KATE.

Willingly, and I think Blanding would second it, for Goss is his particular, in fact, his bosom friend. However, have one or the other of them I am determined. I think it will be Goss; at

least, father wishes it to be so. You shall come to the wedding, Mrs. Gudgeon, and be pleased with the bridegroom, too! [*Exit KATE BRISK.*]

MRS. GUDGEON.

Pleased with a cross child, or a horse in overalls sooner! Foolish, fickle thing! Kind Charles Blanding must be abandoned for this lacquered upstart, that professes to be his friend for the purpose of seducing his mistress. That Goss is a rascal, I'll warrant, for the Gosses always was said to have had blood in their veins from their grandfather, the tory quartermaster. We'll see whether poor Blanding's to be cast off in this way, like so much foul linen. I'll have Mr. Gudgeon in this business in four-and-twenty hours, or my name shall be taken from the family record as Margaret Cox, now Gudgeon.

## SCENE II.

*The street.*

BOTCH and GUDGEON.

BOTCH.

Oh! this is dreadful news: support yourself against the wall, Mr. Gudgeon—you had better. Shocking! shocking!

GUDGEON.

What is it? For mercy's sake what is it, Botch?

BOTCH.

They've got Old Crumb up for a candidate.

GUDGEON.

What for, alderman?

BOTCH.

Yes, sir.

GUDGEON.

Against me?

BOTCH.

Yes, sir, and he's as popular as the baker before breakfast, or the brewer after dinner. Whole flocks of people are winging their way to the polls, like so many pigeons in autumn.

GUDGEON.

This must be put a stop to.

BOTCH.

They come out of the houses by hundreds; all the carriages have got Zachary Crumb on them, and the minister has voted for him already.

GUDGEON.

There must be an end to this.

BOTCH.

I doubt whether there be such a thing as an end to it.

*Enter GLIB.*

GLIB.

I have just halted to tell you that the whole lower section of the ward has gone for Crumb, in a body.

GUDGEON.

You know that's a poor part of the ward.

GLIB.

It's rumored that the Quakers are moving in his favor, and I'm afraid the plague will get among the lamplighters and watchmen, for these bodies lie near each other, and the Quakers chiefly furnish for the public lamps. So look to yourselves—I am off, to address the meeting of proscribed citizens of this class. [*Exit GLIB.*]

BOTCH.

I forgot to tell you, sir, that they have planted a great liberty-pole on one of the corners.

GUDGEON.

Thank Heaven! that hasn't a vote.

BOTCH.

No, sir, that's not a citizen, although it carries its head so high. And they've got flags displayed from a thousand private houses, with Crumb's name on in large letters—twice as big as ours.

GUDGEON.

Who could have done that? Our painter was ordered to put my name in the very largest possible capitals.

BOTCH.

Besides this, sir, they have brought out two immense wagons, that carry twenty-four deep, and they are both hurrying voters up, five in a row, breast-wise, like so many fish packed in a firkin for market.

GUDGEON.

Botch, this is certainly the most astonishing thing I have ever known. I have heard of wild buffaloes rushing down rocks a hundred and fifty feet high; but for human-kind, why, it's sheer madness. Was it a full moon last night?

BOTCH.

It was.

GUDGEON.

It must be that—their brains are turned. I consider the city is ruined; it never can recover from this shock. I shall have no documents to sign for the corporation—that's clear. I am

sorry I sat up last night to address the voters, for it was a great inconvenience.

BOTCH.

Don't despair, sir, I beg you not to despair.

GUDGEON.

I must despair, Botch; there's no other enjoyment left to me.

BOTCH.

Can't you walk between the two men drunk, as we agreed?—that might cheer you up.

GUDGEON.

Thank you for the suggestion. I'll do it. It must have an exhilarating effect, and may turn the tide. Get the men ready. [*Botch retiring.*] But, Botch, be good enough not to have them overdone; not too drunk, if you please.

[*Exeunt GUDGEON and BOTCH severally.*]

## SCENE III.

*The same.*

BRISK and CROWDER.

CROWDER.

We must carry this election, or I am undone. They have levied on the liberty-pole in front of my door as personal property; and the glorious cap, with all those mottoes that please the mob so much, will be struck off with the greatest rudeness, by the hammer of some tenpenny auctioneer.—Foolish love of civil liberty! I had better have clothed my back, or lined my belly, than have spent my substance in planting liberty-trees that are as barren as crabs.

BRISK.

Poh! Crowder—you know better; it's a perfect bread-plant to the office-seeker; and more poor Christians have gained a living by shaking it, and opening their mouths and throwing up their caps under it, than all the peach, plum, apricot, and greening trees in Christendom. Forty thousand worthy gentlemen, in this noble republic of ours alone, climb this tree annually, and furnish their families a very pretty livelihood. Think of that

CROWDER.

I do think of that; and if I only had a snug government birth during one president's term, I'd whistle at Fortune, and rattle my silver with the best men in the land.

BRISK.

If we succeed, as we must—look at the prospect, it's almost enough to bring tears into one's eyes—you shall be made a contractor for the almshouse, and have a nice little profit on every morsel that goes into a pauper's mouth: a perfect prince of a contractor: and not a candle

shall be snuffed in the establishment, nor an eyelid dropped, without your having clipped the tallow and discounted the drug for both.

CROWDER.

I am then to have the furnishing of physic as well as food to my poor children on the island?

BRISK.

Of course, for medicine is a natural part of the diet of a pauper. He requires scouring as much as pewter pots, and takes sulphur as freely as if he had been educated in a match factory.—The very poorhouse dog, Crowder, shall not dare to shake himself in the yard without your permission, and a collar of your providing, to make it known that he's the slave of King Crowder, and owes him a per-centage. And so we will reward you.

CROWDER.

And how will you reward yourself?

BRISK.

Very simply.—You have heard of Greenwich lane?—Well; my great-uncle, the bachelor, owned a small plot of ground there, in the heart of a block, which he used as a circus, and made a tolerable income therefrom, with a bear and fiddle, two stunted shetlands, and a loafer clown; but, since that lively period, and a different current of population, the ground hasn't paid taxes, and has, in fact, been a dead weight at the end of my pocket. Now, mark me, when I become alderman, we will have that same Greenwich lane broadened into an avenue, which will just take the short front lots away, and bring my pretty plot of ground upon the street, without a penny's assessment. All this shall be done for the good of the people, the health of the neighborhood, or any other patriotic and high-minded considerations.

CROWDER.

Nobly contrived! But here's a new difficulty—Old Zachary Crumb, who has been started by the citizens, you know, is said to be making great headway.

BRISK.

Poh! A weak old man, who will make about as much headway as a superannuated race-horse brought out upon the course ten years after he has lost his natural heat and powers of motion.

CROWDER.

The people, they say, are gathering for him in great numbers.

BRISK.

Have no fears! it's only a device of our own friends to blind the enemy. Two thirds of the votes that go in the boxes for Gudgeon and Crumb, will come out, mark my word, for John Brisk, and no other! *[Exeunt severally.]*

## SCENE IV.

*A public room.*

GLIB, *discovered on a platform, speaking, with citizens before him.*

GLIB.

Ay! fellow citizens, I dare avouch,  
And call star-spangled heaven to witness it,  
Posterity shall know—be proud to know,  
Ye gallant band of watchmen, thus proscribed,  
And lamplighters of eighteen thirty-five—  
To know that ye your caps thrust back, your  
coats  
Threw off, and down your ladders cast, despi-  
sing  
The power that took your offices away.  
How in their cradles will your grandbabes  
thrill.  
Thinking that they are yours!—sons of men  
that dared  
To blow a blast of stern defiance  
On the trump—

CITIZEN. *(To his neighbor.)*

Now we'll have something nice; he's always  
good on trumpets.

GLIB.

Of patriotic fire that shook  
These soup-fed tyrants in their chairs of pow-  
er:—  
That you it was, who raised the bloody flag—

CITIZEN.

His flags, if such a thing be possible, is bet-  
ter than his trumpets.

GLIB.

Far up on high, where still it shall be held,  
Until to fibres heaven's winds have whistled it  
No larger than the small spool-cotton threads.  
Yes, yes, my fellow-citizens, inspired  
With large and noble thoughts, and in a cause  
That sun-lit planets might be jealous of—  
The cause of lamplighters extinguished,  
Of watchmen wakened—burst beneath the feet  
Of these stern men, like to an earthquake  
Underneath a factory of earthenware,  
And into fifty thousand fragments break  
Their fragile power.

CITIZEN.

Good! I told you his earthquakes was nice.

SECOND CITIZEN.

That earthquake, it strikes me, burst rather  
too much like an overdone egg.

CITIZEN.

Earthquakes is more like melons, and re-  
quires a nice hand and strong fire to get 'em  
up to the true pitch. I never heard a speaker  
that did earthquakes better than Glib.

GLIB.

Lo ! Freedom's temple, now—

CITIZEN.

Now listen, neighbor : if this ain't the best-built thing you've ever known, call me a ground-mole.

GLIB.

Begirt with peril ! Yea, that edifice  
Reared on the bones, cemented by the blood  
Of all our grandsires and their wives,  
Hewed by their swords, and with their shields  
roofed in  
With scabbards lathed :—To hostile dire as-  
saults

This holy, sacred temple 'gins to yield,  
Beleaguered round ; but hope, my countrymen,  
Dawns, through the darkness dawns, and  
'gainst the walls

I see large ladders planted fearlessly.  
Yours they are, ye agile lamplighters !  
The alarm-rap I hear—it calls aloud  
The friends of civil liberty together.  
Ye vigilant guardians of the night,  
That solemn summons from your clubs as-  
cends.—

Now, from this huge height of rhetoric to fall :

CITIZEN.

See how gracefully he comes down ; never  
flew from a house-top, a turtle dove gracefuller.

SECOND CITIZEN.

In truth, my friend, he went up like a heavy-  
winged fowl, and I doubt not he will come  
down like a night hawk by daylight.

CITIZEN.

Well, listen—listen, and no disparagements.

GLIB.

I say the lamplighters, upon th' alert,  
Have sprung with all their 'customed nimble-  
ness.

The watchmen, I repeat, the watchmen are  
*awake*,  
Quite wide awake, (*great cheering*), and if the  
foe survive

Beyond the four-and-twenty hours now next  
Ensuing, gauged by town-clock time, I pray  
you

Call Slickson Glib, thenceforth, with my con-  
sent,

An owl, a blind bat, and no true prophet !

SCENE V.

*The street.**Various citizens, meeting.*

AN OLD CITIZEN.

This almost makes me young again, neigh-

bor. It looks like twenty years ago—this en-  
thusiasm for a citizen's candidate.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Did you mark when the sky was overcast  
this morning, how the sun shone on Crumb's  
name on the banner, while all the rest was in  
darkness ?

OLD CITIZEN.

I did, and it's a sight I saw but once before  
in my life, and that was when this old soldier  
that voted to-day, was baptized—the sun fell  
through the upper church window on his white  
old head, as he went down into the baptistry,  
making a single golden spot in the midst of the  
congregation.

SECOND CITIZEN.

He deserves the heavenly approval.—He is  
too pure-hearted to be made a tool of politi-  
cians ; and I was glad to see the old man,  
when he approached the poll, cast off the ban-  
dages and patches they had thrust upon him,  
pretending to draw down respect for his vet-  
eran services, by these signs, from the people.  
When he learned there was a third ticket, he  
exchanged his ballots at once, and voted for  
Zachary Crumb.

THIRD CITIZEN.

I entered with a crowd of thirty, and when  
they were asked, "What ticket do you vote ?"  
they all answered, like a corporation of dea-  
cons on a grant for new pew-cushions, "Old  
Crumb," and shook hands as if they had met  
at a wedding.

OLD CITIZEN.

Yea, and I have seen old men like myself here  
to-day, that have not cast a ballot before for the  
last fifteen years. I have seen sick men, that  
apparently tarried in the world but to deposite  
a vote for Crumb, and young lads just of age,  
(but who have been smiled on by this good man  
when they have borne satchels at their sides)  
hurry up as eagerly as if it were a holiday  
business.

SECOND CITIZEN.

They say that when Brisk entered to give  
his own vote, the eagle that his friends had  
perched on a staff above the door, shrieked and  
dropped his wings ; but this I can scarcely be-  
lieve, although I know of my own eye-knowl-  
edge, that a parrot which a sailor brought up  
with him, when his master was solicited to vote  
for Gudgeon, exclaimed, in answer for the  
sailor, "Not so green !"

OLD CITIZEN.

The bird was figurative, of course, for I  
marked the creature, and of a deeper literal  
green was no parrot's jacket that I ever beheld.  
That sailor, I think I was told, was one of a  
crew of fifty that came in only last night from

the Friendly islands of the Pacific, and not one failed the true ticket.

*Enter a FOURTH CITIZEN.*

FOURTH CITIZEN.

Cheerly, friends, cheerly: the Brisk men and Gudgeonites begin to give way, and it's said about the poll that Crumb has the day thus far by a hundred!

OLD CITIZEN.

Let's hasten to the ground, and, while we gather the rumor, give countenance to our friends. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VI.

*Blanding's apartments.*

OLD CRUMB and BLANDING.

CRUMB.

Well, Charles, how fares your wooing?

BLANDING.

Strangely enough: the more my proposed father-in-law dotes on me as Jefferson Goss, the more he detests me as Charles Blanding.

CRUMB.

So you are likely to succeed as a pretender, and to come off poorly as a man of merit? Isn't that the way of the world?

BLANDING.

I think it is—and while I am allowed to eat his cranberries and woodcock as the nephew of a senator that has no existence, I am regaled with curses as the child of my own mother.

CRUMB.

You are then faring admirably, I think, for in either event, you will have your mistress: if she marries you in the name of one of the logical postulates, what matters it, so long as she gets the person she likes.

BLANDING.

But I imagine she would scarcely be pleased to open house with me in an upper cell of the city prison, and receive her wedding calls in the character of an indicted impostor's wife with an alias!

CRUMB.

Have no fears of that!—Do you rehearse the character you have assumed, carefully? An error in the keeping might be disastrous.

BLANDING.

I believe I am doing myself justice there, for I read the Washington letter-writers every morning for politics, and visit Delmonico's and

bully the waiters, to acquire the right style of manners, in the afternoon.

CRUMB.

Do you, as the hypothetical great man's nephew, disparage American institutions steadily when you are at Brisk's?

BLANDING.

No, I haven't brought myself to that perfection yet; but I speak contemptuously of American habits, intellect, society, commerce, literature, and American things generally, which I thought would answer the same purpose.

CRUMB.

Of course, you have not omitted a minute biography of the imaginary senator?

BLANDING.

By no means; for although I treat every other native production with contempt, I always speak of the senator with the utmost reverence. I have given Brisk a particular history of his early life and struggles, his labors on a semi-weekly country newspaper, with a circulation of nineteen paying subscribers—

CRUMB.

Didn't you overstate the matter a little there?

BLANDING.

His first speech on the occasion of a sheep-shearing in the waters of a private pond, with the great questions involved therein, which were destined (as usual) to shake our institutions and jeopard the Union itself. Then I described to him the style of the senator's congressional oratory—and how one day he came into the senate chamber without an idea, and spoke six hours on the establishment of a college for young Indians in Michigan—and how, when he was through, the audience were so astonished at his fluency, they didn't recollect a word he had said.

CRUMB.

This must have made a vast deal of dry talking for you.

BLANDING.

Not at all; for it was constantly moistened with gentle showers of Madeira and perfect love, and sustained by more solid supplies. In fact, I relied on my appetite more than any other single point, to establish my character; and the more I devoured, the more Brisk's eyes dilated with admiration of my supposed connexion with the distinguished senator.

CRUMB.

Well, brave it out, Charles, with a bold face—it pleases me to have this shrewd politician outwitted so cheaply. All will end well, for the charm is now brewing—this very hour—

that shall give us the magician's voice over the issues of this business. [*Exeunt severally.*]

## SCENE VII.

*A street near the poll.*

GUDGEON and GLIB, meeting.

GUDGEON.

As I told you, you will find a house in Cherry street—

GLIB.

Very likely—you will find houses in every street in the city, except the new-fangled streets that are no streets, but two parallels of speculative kerbstone.

GUDGEON.

But listen to me, Mr. Glib—time presses. It's a lodging-house (I forgot the number), with an exchange office at one side of it, and a toy shop, a shop where they vend masks at the other.

GLIB.

Why, this must be the church that you are directing me to!—for there you will find false faces enough I'll warrant, and money-changers too, at times. And I'm sure there's sufficient sleeping done there to earn for it the character of a lodging-house. So I have your direction.—What next?

GUDGEON.

If it were a church, it would not be a wrong place, at a suitable season, to look for the man to whom I send you: in a word, you must go immediately and secure the vote of Bill Baffin, the stevedore. He is sick, and I'd have you treat him kindly.

GLIB.

It shall be done, sir; the old whale shall flounder his vote in, if it's his last act.

GUDGEON.

Kindly, I say, Mr. Glib; but bring him by all means. One vote may make or ruin us.

GLIB.

Oh, he shall come sir, if it's on crutches, and if I am obliged to be as persuasive as Patrick Henry. He shall come.

GUDGEON.

And after that, you will be good enough to come to me at the public room, where I shall be engaged buoying up our friends, and eating burnt crackers and old cheese with the voters, for effect. [*Exeunt severally.*]

## SCENE VIII.

*A sick chamber, Baffin in an armchair, &c.*

BILL BAFFIN.

I am afraid my last hour is at hand; and the old keel will have to be sunk in the earth for ever, and left there to decay, like a dead root. The sun goes fast; I begin to lose my reckoning, and with the next round of the time-keeper, I shall be counted with the ships that have foundered. Well, well—we'll trust yet to the old Commander aloft.—Who knocks? In!—

*Enter GLIB.*

GLIB.

Ah! Mr Baffin, this is a sad pass for one of your mould!—the stoutest stevedore on the river!

BAFFIN.

Ay, and the weakest on the deathbed.

GLIB.

Not so bad—not so bad, I trust. But now that I look in your eye, there is something that shines like the next world. Anyhow, you carry a free heart out of this.

BAFFIN.

So I humbly hope.

GLIB.

Is there nothing on your mind? No single act to be performed? No little duty undischarged?

BAFFIN.

None that my memory wots of. So help me God, not one!

GLIB.

Nothing that you owe to your family—your fellow-citizens—your country?

BAFFIN.

Nothing!

GLIB.

Bethink yourself—think of the present day—the present hour. Have you, for example, deposited your ballot?—a sacred duty, remember.

BAFFIN.

Yes, with the sexton—as a candidate for the other world. Another knock—who can it be?—Come in!—my friends increase toward the extremity.

*Enter CROWDER.*

CROWDER.

Don't listen to that man, Mr. Baffin! I have the true ticket—Human rights, sir!

GLIB.

Have at you, sir! mine is civil liberty!

CROWDER.

An unlimited democracy!

GLIB.

No taxes, pew-rents, ground-rents, assessments—

CROWDER.

Sumptuous accommodations for paupers.

GLIB.

A bill of special privileges for stevedores!  
(*In Baffin's ear*)—Gudgeon has a job for you.

CROWDER. (*Whispers.*)

The office of dockmaster.

BAFFIN. (*Springs up, and with his crutch drives them from the room.*)

Out, ravens and sharks! Away with you, and let me yield my breath in peace.

GLIB. (*Returning.*)

Your vote is all-important; if your health should improve before sundown, send us word, and you shall have a coach to bring you to the poll.  
[*Exit GLIB.*]

CROWDER. (*Looks in.*)

Poor creature, he begins to flush!—D——n me, it's a vote lost.  
[*Exit CROWDER.*]

## SCENE IX.

*The open street.*

BRISK and CROWDER, *meeting, in haste.*

BRISK.

Have you brought up the shabby volunteers?

CROWDER.

I have, sir; and they all discharged their oath like a drilled company of riflemen.

BRISK.

The wollopers and tag-end ragamuffins?

CROWDER.

Ay, sir; and they came into the poll like the ghosts of so many pawnbrokers, with all their stock-in-trade at their heels.

BRISK.

The man with the smallpox?

CROWDER.

No, but he is hard-by.

BRISK.

I think we had better throw him in. Matters look desperate, and a wholesome panic may

relieve us of superfluous voters on the other side—for it would surely have the effect to scatter Gudgeon's friends. *They* have prejudices against contagion, whereas, our men, you know, are smallpox-proof. You have not neglected the suburbs, I trust.

CROWDER.

Hardly; we have depopulated two taverns at the Wallabout; a naval force of six oyster-boats has landed from Staten island. We have scoured Newtown creek and taken captive four brace of honest countrymen, who are pledged to swear their tickets through, with flying excursions, from time to time, into Queens county and the Jerseys.

BRISK.

There's a one-eyed man, that tends the shot-tower at Kipp's bay; I hope he'll not be forgotten. He's generally overlooked on account of his forlorn situation.

CROWDER.

Hadn't we better open a few fresh brandy-bottles at Works's? There's a danger of faint-heartedness coming on them toward night, unless some such thing is done.

BRISK.

By all means; and, if necessary, broach a new barrel of beer. The chief of our work is to be done in an hour. Strike swiftly, and let every spigot tell on the canvass! In the meantime I'll go and talk Dutch with the German voters, and O'hone a little with the Hibernians.  
[*Exeunt severally.*]

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

*An old Citizen and others, meeting in front of Crumb's house.*

SECOND CITIZEN.

Well, the day is ours, and a brighter hasn't left the sky since this island was parcelled into wards!

OLD CITIZEN.

Only one brighter, I admit, and that was the day George Washington crossed the river to take the chief magistrate's oath. This is a true and joyful day. I shall not scruple to put it in the family-bible as a memorable day.

SECOND CITIZEN.

My girl, Mary, shall work it in a sampler, with evergreens over the top, and a great lion rushing out of a corner to devour the sneaking spotted zebra that I will have her figure on the other side of the sampler. And that shall denote that the foul beast, the spotted knave of politics, is



whipped and vanquished, and the true-hearted one, honest old Crumb, triumphant.

OLD CITIZEN.

I suppose the citizens will have a procession, and, if they do, I'll lend them the old blade my father wore at Yorktown, with a pair of Hessian boots, captured with his own hands from the owner, to carry as trophies above their banner!

THIRD CITIZEN.

I wonder whether Crumb is stirring?

FOURTH CITIZEN.

I think not; and if he were, he is but little of a speaker, and would thank us silently; so let us give a good round shout, and leave.

ALL.

Agreed! *[They shout and retire.]*

## SCENE II.

*In front of Brisk's house.*

BRISK.

Beaten!—After all our stratagems and schemings, the supper at Works's, the slander at the poll; after enlisting the uttermost rank and file of the earth, invading the canvass with the halt, the blind, the dumb, and the deaf, and threatening the inspectors themselves with infection—beaten!—this is the very condensed abstract and story of the whole matter.

*Enter Crowder.*

BRISK.

What say you to this, Crowder?

CROWDER.

I say it's the greatest damper that has happened since the flood.

BRISK.

I suppose it hasn't left you a cinder of spirit to contest the matter further? You are completely quenched.

CROWDER.

Not altogether; I proposed to the committee to battle it before the canvassers, but they groaned at the suggestion like whipped hounds; and, by the Lord, they are no better than curs, or they would have made a rush for the ballot-box last night; the inspectors passed through a by-street, and it might have been as easily done as kissing a wench.

BRISK.

Fie, fie, Crowder!—we must move gently; anything but a misdemeanor or open breach of law. You may scrawl on the glass as hard and

K

as hard words as you choose, but you shall not, with my consent, make a flaw in it.

CROWDER.

The liberty-pole goes to the hammer at noon.

BRISK.

If that's all, let it pass; it's nothing but a stick of timber.

CROWDER.

That's not all, for there's my assortment of trumpets and banners, besides my extra wardrobe of electioneering coats with false pockets and spread-eagle buttons; my crutches for lame voters; a box of green shades for blind ones, and my little book of facts in the private history of politicians. That's the most cruel levy.

BRISK.

How, in the name of secrecy, were these things discovered by the officer?

CROWDER.

Why, t e cursed rascal's a Gudgeonite, and instead of making a front-door levy, as a gentleman should, the villain came in with his execution through the scuttle, and the first drag he made was this precious cargo, which lay in a pantry in the garret.

BRISK.

Unfortunate, very unfortunate, Crowder.

CROWDER.

Barbarous enough, and I'm now bankrupt; for, with that book in my hand, I could make myself acceptable to any set of politicians. But my day's over; and now that I have exhausted my lungs and my ingenuity, in this election, to no purpose, I think I'll return to my original vocation, of manufacturing bellows-snouts and hoe-irons. *[Retiring.]*

BRISK.

I think you are well-advised in that. Politics is, after all, a poor trade; but you shall always have my custom, Crowder. I need a new snout a year, and I have two country-brothers that I have no doubt will take a hoe a-piece annually. Good day. *[Exit Crowder.]*

BRISK.

Now that clamorous Tom Crowder is disposed of, what shall we do with cunning Jack Brisk? Is he on his back—flat on his back, think you? Cudgelled out of all his contrivances, and beaten into the consistency of an addled egg—have his wits lost their saltiness, and the nimble blood that coursed through his brain turned into ditch-water? Not exactly—not altogether so. Zachary Crumb is alderman—old Zachary Crumb, and if I do not cozen his venerable understanding to my purpose, call me a stale herring. Why, hasn't he a vote in the council-

chambers, the same as if John Brisk himself had been chosen? I'll be the master of that vote, and, to gain that mastery, I'll humor the old curmudgeon's whims. He wishes this Blanding to marry my daughter Kate; what reasonable objection can there be to that? Kate is rich by legacy, and is destined to wed some poor fellow without a farthing; and why not this Blanding as well as another? He is good-looking, they say, and accomplished. It seems feasible—very, extremely feasible. But there's Mr. Goss—hard to part with so distinguished a connexion; but the gruff dog, self-interest, shows his teeth, and we must part: I'll be quits with him by a plausible letter.

[Exit BRISK.]

### SCENE III.

*In front of Gudgeon's house.*

GUDGEON, GLIB, and BOTCH.

GUDGEON.

I thought it ill-advised—extremely ill-advised, not to allow me to exhibit my person more prominently during the canvass. I am satisfied it must have turned the tide.

BOTCH.

It was only regard for your personal safety—

GUDGEON.

Regard for my personal safety, Botch! Stuff! Have I not been called the fearless Gudgeon by resolution of a public meeting—and am I to be prevented from throwing myself into bold relief at a critical time? Who says that Robert Gudgeon should not have shown himself, like a man, at every conspicuous point, instead of being mewed up like a sick parrot, in a scanty room to receive hourly reports of the election?

GLIB.

If we had known that so much evangelical spirit was in you, we could have made a St. Stephen of you in a few minutes.

GUDGEON.

St. Stephen, St. Paul, and St. Book-of-the-Acts—what are they to me? I am a plain man and no prophet, and, I can tell you this, matters would have had a different ending if I had had my way.

GLIB.

Why, sir, you had your own way about the walk with the drunkards, and I must confess you made an admirable thing of it.

GUDGEON.

You think I did—Eh?

GLIB.

Most admirable: first, you were dressed in capital taste; your glaring buttons made you a

mark a hundred yards off, and you shone like Orion with his stars all about him; then, you pitched this way and that way so excellently, as your two friends swayed, that many thought you all three a little in liquor.

GUDGEON.

That was good—very good; but what did they say of my mode of taking snuff, as we turned the corner.

GLIB.

Admirable! They never saw a point more nicely turned, than your emptying the contents of the box into your own hand, and giving the lid to one and the bottom to the other; it was the best practical joke they had ever witnessed.

GUDGEON.

So I thought myself; but that affair of the balcony was not managed as it should have been. When they cheered for Gudgeon, I should have stepped out and waved my hat; and when they sent the oranges through the window, it would have been proper for me to pick them up and say, "Thank ye, gentlemen, I'll present these to Mrs. Gudgeon"—for that's the way I understood it.

GLIB.

It was a mere trick of the enemy, to draw you out and pelt you.

BOTCH.

And drench you, too; for I saw a great two-handed fellow with a huge syringe, loaded with dyers' stuff—

GUDGEON.

They would never have dared to do it. The moment I had shown myself, they would have quailed like tame rabbits. Depend on it, that neglect at the balcony, and one or two like points, have been the death of us; but I'll have satisfaction of Brisk, in one way.

BOTCH.

Heavens! I wish that could be done!

GUDGEON.

Botch, it shall be done. I'll have Blanding marry his daughter in spite of his teeth; and that will play the mischief with his projects, or I'm an ass! So Mrs. Gudgeon says.

[Exeunt.]

### SCENE IV.

*Crumb's house.*

CRUMB and BRISK.

CRUMB.

This is certainly an age of miracles; for instance, there is the old lady, my neighbor,

whose eyesight, that's been impaired these five years, is so wonderfully improved by one of the great oculists of the day, that she can now even distinguish a bankrupt's carriage from the poor-house hearse, that's carrying his creditor to the grave; an attorney from a tax-gatherer; an officer of police from a pickpocket, and a physician from a criminal convicted at the Oyer and Terminer of a murder! And now, at the tail of these wonders, comes John Brisk, and calls me alderman, and gives me the pleasure of his society as freely as a twin-brother.

BRISK.

I admit this is something out of the customary line of things; but it is as a brother, a twin-brother, if you please, that I wait upon you to-day.

CRUMB.

Well, here's a miracle greater than them all; a politician, who but yesterday was as busy as a pawnbroker's clerk putting out his greasy boxcoats after the first cold nip in November, and as noisy as the square a week after quarter-day, when all the old furniture in the town comes under the hammer to pay rent—this self-same roaring gentleman subsiding, to day, into the twin-brother—was it the twin-brother?—of a decayed old man! Oh! its enough to burst one's heart with melancholy!

BRISK.

I hope you will be good enough to delay the bursting for the present, for I wish to enlist its kind services in a business that I have very near my own heart.

CRUMB.

In any such business, if you could satisfy me of these conditions, I would be pleased to act.

BRISK.

It's a business of a delicate nature, sir, and one in which you might scruple to be employed. But it has agitated me a long time, and I must move in it, or be miserable.

CRUMB.

If the difficulty has not been more than a century growing, and be not larger than a mountain in size, I think something may be done.

BRISK.

May I depend on you, sir?—as brother depends on brother?

CRUMB.

Perhaps you may.

BRISK.

It will require your whole ingenuity and kindness steadily employed; in a word, (*whispering*) I am anxious to bring about a union between my daughter, Miss Catharine Brisk, and

a young gentleman of great respectability, by the name of Blanding.

CRUMB.

Are you assured of his respectability?

BRISK.

Of that, there can be no question—not the slightest.

CRUMB.

Of what family of Blandings is he? There is an upper family of that name and a lower, I think. With which does he class?

BRISK.

Upon my word, I never gave that a thought. The young man's merit is so predominant, I entirely lost sight of every such consideration, and if he had been born and reared in a cave, it would not have struck me very forcibly.

CRUMB. (*Pretending to remember.*)

Blanding, Blanding—is his Christian name Charles?

BRISK.

It is, sir, and I had hopes you might know him; in fact, I had some indistinct recollection of such a fact.

CRUMB.

Yes, yes—you have a sprightly memory, and you should cultivate it. But what kind of person has this young gentleman? Is he comely?

BRISK.

Oh, exceeding comely.—A picked man out of a thousand: a broad manly chest, a clear bold voice that rings like a trumpet, and a step and gesture full of majesty. He looks like one of the gods in the old painting.

CRUMB.

Hath he accomplishments?

BRISK.

There he lacks not—for on the flute, his favorite instrument, he plays ravishly; every breath is an achievement, and as you listen, you regard his stick as sacred, like a fragment of the cross, or a splinter brought from King Solomon's temple. I do believe if he had been Noah's grandson, and had played in the ark, it would have gone far toward assuaging the wild deluge.

CRUMB.

Now that you describe him so justly, I know the young man well. I will move him to second your wishes.

BRISK.

I shall be most happy.—Be urgent, if you please.

CRUMB.

I shall not neglect the proper means to impress on him the match you propose. (*Aside*—Particularly as his mind is already unalterably fixed in its favor.)

BRISK.

I shall regard it as a personal kindness of the highest obligation.

CRUMB.

It shall be speeded.

BRISK.

And will never forget the debt.

CRUMB.

(*Aside*—If I vote for your project in the common council. I shall be satisfied if he pays the debt and relieves his memory of the burden of recollecting it!) It shall be looked to on the instant; and you shall be freed quickly from your state of painful agitation. Sons-in-law grow on every bush, and I will out at once, sir, and pick one to your liking.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

## SCENE V.

*The open street.*GUDGEON—to him, *Enter BOTCH.*

BOTCH.

It's all arranged, sir; Goss is to marry Miss Kate Brisk to-day at twelve; Tom Scissors, the attorney, is to be trustee of the estate for her benefit, and immediately after the deed is drawn and the dinner over, they start for the capitol.

GUDGEON.

Mark my word, if I am Robert Gudgeon, and not some impostor or other under that name, it shall all be disarranged, and not a particle of the whole matter shall fall out as you have described it.

BOTCH.

That would truly be a marvel!

GUDGEON.

I grant you the parties shall be present at Brisk's house as you have said, but there shall be another there they have forgotten to invite; and that will be Mrs. Margery Gudgeon, my own spouse.

BOTCH.

That will make a very pretty little wedding of it!

GUDGEON.

Yes, a very pretty little wedding, Botch, but not exactly such a wedding as they contemplate. The manner of it shall be thus: you

are to have my coach about the corner in the neighborhood of Brisk's—the corner with the yellow front—precisely at eleven.

BOTCH.

Am I to tell William to grain the horses before he comes out?

GUDGEON.

Yes—let them be well filled with oats, for speed will be needful, and at the rendezvous punctually as the hall gives out eleven.—You will be stationed in the baker's yard, and when Mrs. Gudgeon shouts from Brisk's window, you will rush along the church fence and order William about with the carriage in front of Brisk's door.

BOTCH.

This will be fine sport—something should come of all this shouting.

GUDGEON.

Something shall come of it, for I will rush instantly up stairs—but after that I'll be present myself. Do you, Botch, be true to your time, and you shall see the upshot.

[*Exit GUDGEON.*]

BOTCH.

I think it will be worth something to see the upshot of all this.—I am to run along the church fence and up the steeple—no, not up the steeple, Mrs. Gudgeon does the steeple, and shouts from the window of Brisk's house; and the coach-horses stuffed with oats run up stairs—or is it William that grains the horses and Mr. Gudgeon that runs up stairs? No matter, I'll see the right of it before it's ended!

[*Exit BOTCH.*]

## SCENE VI.

*Brisk's house.*BRISK alone—*Enter SERVANT.*

SERVANT.

The gentleman with the large whiskers is below again, sir.

BRISK.

I thought I had told you to reconnoitre through the side-light, and not admit him.

SERVANT.

We did sir; but he took us by surprise, by ringing like the penny-post; and now, sir, he's making his way up stairs like the colossus of Rhodes in the spelling-book. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

*Enter BLANDING, as JEFFERSON GOSS.*

BLANDING.

Good morning to you, Brisk—Up with the lark—eh!—That's your sorts. I wish I had a brace of the sky-scrappers broiled for a luncheon.

BRISK.

Why, really, sir, this is an unexpected pleasure, after the letters I sent you. You must have received them, sir, for I sent them by my attorney's clerk, and he carries as true as a rifle. You must have misapprehended my meaning, sir.

BLANDING.

Not at all, sir—I wish to marry your daughter; you wish your daughter to marry me—and she agrees with both of us.

BRISK.

You have misread my letter, sir. I there stated, that I regretted that a prior engagement prevented the honor of an alliance with you, and that I wished you to present my respects to your uncle, the senator, and name to him in the kindest possible way, that when he came in town to his public dinner, I would explain the business to his satisfaction. Did you read me so?

BLANDING.

Something facetious of that sort, I confess, was handed to me—but it's all a joke, Brisk. Now confess, Brisk, you wrote under the influence of excitement—the bottle, perhaps?

BRISK.

Under the influence of the bottle, sir! This is too much for you, even with your great connexions. Am I a dunghill fowl, that you fling your spurs at me in this way? I'd have you know the Brisks have blood, sir—yes, blood—blood; the Brisks of Bethpeg, sir, of Babylon, Jerico, and Hempstead, have as good veins as the president himself!—

BLANDING.

But, sir, the fun of the thing—

BRISK.

D——n the fun!

BLANDING.

And the senator's rage.

BRISK.

D——n the senator's rage!

BLANDING.

And my own feelings—

BRISK.

*Enter MRS. GUDGEON at one side, KATE BRISK at the other.*

MRS GUDGEON.

Bless my stars! here they are, and the diabolical tragedy will be perpetrated in a cock-crow. What a ferocious monster this Goss is! I know him by the description. He looks for all the world like a buffalo that the droviers kept in my father's woods, and fed on acorns

and heifers' milk.—I'll shout to Mr. Gudgeon. *(Puts her head out at the window and calls)*—Gudgeon! Quick, or it will all be over—Gudgeon!

*Enter CRUMB.*

CRUMB.

Good-morrow, Alderman Crumb.

CRUMB.

Good-morrow, sir.—Ah! a happy day to you, child. Blessed influences are abroad this morning—and depend on it, they will shine here before they set.

BRISK.

*(Aside)*—I wish I could get rid of this fellow, Goss—He has fixed himself upon me like the stamp-act, and I'm afraid there'll be a devil of an insurrection before he will quit the country.) But where's the bridegroom? He travels slower than his tribe, not to be here by this time.

CRUMB.

Oh, sir, he will be here in good season, or there's no attraction in two fair planets. Astronomy is at fault as well as witchcraft, if he tarries beyond the putting on of a glove-finger, or giving a new turn to his wedding-day smile in the looking-glass—*(Blanding removes his whiskers, &c., while Brisk's back is towards him.)* Behold him, sir!

BRISK.

Ah, son-in-law, I am happy, most sincerely happy to see you. You need not blush, for you have not come about a business that we do not all understand, and take an interest in.

BLANDING.

Thank you—My old friend, here, has explained, I presume.

BRISK.

Oh yes, he has explained all. Nothing could more exactly meet my wishes. From this day forth, I shall write myself down, "the contented man."

CRUMB. *(Aside.)*

If Greenwich lane cuts into the proper avenue! Otherwise—the baffled manager!

*Enter GUDGEON—after him, BOTCH.*GUDGEON. *(Shouting.)*

I forbid the match; I forbid the match. It's arson and burglary—He has broken in and stolen your daughter's affections, and he has set fire to her poor heart as he went out. Goss is an impostor, sir; it's a case for the police court. Besides, there will be murder added, for aught I know, for Botch, here, says poor Blanding is pining this very minute in a lonesome attic, and does nothing all day, but wrap his head in a cotton handkerchief, and write sonnets and madrigals and pennyroyals.

BOTCH.

And I heard just now, as I came along, sir, that the neighbors were afraid he meditated something, because they have seen him several nights looking out of the skylight at the moon, and then running down the ladder and putting his quill in swifter motion over foolscap paper, than it ever had in the bird's wing—even when the bird itself was out of its wits with fright from a double-barrelled gun.

BRISK.

I knew something must come out—I was quite sure of it.—Mr. Gudgeon, my intended son-in-law, Charles Blanding.

GUDGEON.

Your intended son-in-law! That was just what I had my carriage got up for—and a chaplain waiting at St. Thomas's—and Botch running about all the morning to effect: that very connexion in the family.

MRS. GUDGEON.

There's witchcraft and petit larceny in this business, as Mr. Gudgeon guessed: for Goss was here a minute ago, and he has stolen off with himself; and Blanding wasn't here a minute ago, and he has come out of the earth, like Samuel's ghost for the witch of Endor.

CRUMB.

A very pretty witch of Endor, too, you must allow, has conjured him up: but there's no ghost here, Mr. Brisk—so don't tremble—it's only the senator's nephew.

KATE.

Nor any Charles Blanding: one of the Gosses of Cross River, Mrs. Gudgeon. You are as familiar with him as a blood relation; but it must be very cold blood, for he has almost petrified you.

MRS. GUDGEON.

Now, Kate, I knew all the time—there was something about the eyes that said they didn't belong to that family. I suspected it was Charles Blanding, all the time.

BLANDING.

Will it be worth while, Mr. Brisk, to deliver this letter to the senator—when I see him?

BRISK.

Yes—when you see him: for I suppose he is as imaginary as his own nephew.—I deserve to be buried in lead for my stupidity in not seeing through this before; but it was your voracity at the table that deceived me—I confided in that to establish your character. It might have deluded any one into the belief in your congressional connexions—might it not, Mr. Crumb?

CRUMB.

It might unquestionably; particularly if, as

Blanding informs me, he was vociferous about port wine and canvass-backs.

BRISK.

Yes, and Long Island cranberries in the bed or in hothouses? and mutton raised on the senator's farm. That overturned my sagacity, I admit: it was enough, you must all confess—for was there ever an American great man, that hadn't his flocks of Merinoes and Durhams and Derbyshires—his long naps and short naps, as well as his public dinners and premeditated extemporaneous speeches!

MRS. GUDGEON.

Happiness be with you, children! and that you may start with the true principle of matrimony—compromise—I shall make Mr. Gudgeon let you have his snug two-storied house in the suburbs, where you, Kate, can look out upon green fields, grasshoppers, and chirping birds, and rivulets; and you, Charles, by mounting to the upper windows or the roof, can catch frequent glimpses of city buildings, citizens, and gashouse smoke, and can even steal a glance into Broadway and its fantastic crowds. On the one side you will be visited by the farmer with fresh eggs and asparagus, and on the other by the taxgatherer with his annual demand, and the captain's orderly with his half-yearly notice of parade.

BRISK.

And to be able to entertain these gentleman, and others of their fraternity, such as duns and milliners, Kate shall be invested with her own property forthwith. Glib shall prepare the papers.

CRUMB.

It would be unkind to have Mr. Gudgeon's morning industry count for nothing, so with his consent we will call his carriage, which I saw at the corner, pack our party in, and relieve the chaplain at St. Thomas's from the painful state of suspense which he must be in by this time; unless the fee was paid in advance.

GUDGEON.

I took that precaution, sir.

BRISK.

That was lucky, and we shall all be happy without a drawback.

CRUMB.

And now I think, we are all agreed on one point;—whatever wranglings or differences may distract houses of congress or legislature, may the debates of this young house be always kindly, and have happy issues! Whatever suffrages may be cast for other "*Politicians*" out of doors, may we always have your votes (*to the audience*) at the end of the evening's canvass in favor of the candidates we venture to present.

POEMS ON MAN,  
IN HIS VARIOUS ASPECTS UNDER  
THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC.





# POEMS ON MAN,

## IN HIS VARIOUS ASPECTS UNDER

### THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC.

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#### I

#### THE CHILD.

CALM, in thy cradle lie, thou little Child,  
 Thy white limbs smoothing in a patient sleep,  
 Or, gambolling when thou wakest at the peep  
 Of the young day—as clear and undefiled  
 As thou! Around thy fresh and lowly bed  
 Look up and see, how reverent men are  
 gathered,  
 In wonder at a babe so greatly fathered  
 Into life, and so by influence fed.

They watch the quiet of thy deep blue eye—  
 Where all the outward world is born anew,  
 Where habit, figure, form, complexion, hue  
 Rise up and live again in that pure sky;  
 At every lifting of thine arms, they feel  
 The ribbed and vasty bulk of Empire shake,  
 And from the fashion of thy features take  
 The hope and image of the common-weal.

See! through the white skin beats the ruddy tide!  
 The pulses of thine heart, that come and go,  
 Like the great circles of the ocean-flow,  
 And dash a continent at either side.  
 Thou wield'st a hopeful Empire, large and fair,  
 With sceptred strength: about thy brow is set  
 A fresh glad crown, with dewy morning wet,  
 And noon-day lingers in thy flaxen hair!

Kingdom, authority and power to thee  
 Belong; the hand that frees, the chain that  
 thralls—

Each attribute on various man that falls,  
 Strides he the globe, or canvass-tents the sea:  
 The sword, the staff, the judge's cap of death,  
 The ruler's robe, the treasurer's key of gold,  
 All growths the world-wide scope of life  
 may hold,  
 Are formed in thee and people in thy breath.

Be stirred or still, as prompts thy beating heart!  
 Out of thy slumbering calmness there shall  
 climb,  
 Spirits serene and true against the Time  
 That trumpets men to an heroic part;  
 And motion shall confirm thee, rough or mild  
 For the full sway that unto thee belongs,  
 In the still house or 'mid the massy throngs  
 Of life—thou gentle and thou sovereign Child!

#### II.

#### THE FATHER.

BEHOLD thyself renewed! But think not there  
 A slave or suppliant lies; nor on him bow  
 Thy curious looks, as if another heir  
 Had sprung to bear about thy civil brow  
 In public streets—thy sober suit to wear:  
 In all things to obey, in all to trust—  
 And, when thy time has past and his ensues,  
 Ape-like to track thee downward in the dust.

See, rather, from the little lids looks out  
 A soul distinct and sphered, its own true star,  
 Shining and axled for a separate way,  
 Be its young orbit's courses near or far.  
 His little hands uplifted for his right  
 To have an individual life allowed—  
 Implore of men, of men, from thee the first,  
 The freedom by his birth-right hour bestowed.

Check not, nor hamper with an idle chain,  
 With customs harsh, of a loose leisure grown,  
 With habitudes of craft, of health or pain  
 The youngling life that asks to be its own:  
 His early friend, his helper and his guide  
 To stay his hold upon the rugged way—  
 Turn not that life-branch from the sun or shade  
 aside,  
 But in heaven's breezes, rather, let it go  
 astray.

Be thou a Heaven of truth and cheerful hope,  
 Clear as the clear, round midnight at its full;  
 And he, the Earth beneath that elder cope—  
 And each 'gainsteach for highest mastery pull:  
 The child and father, each shall fitly be—  
 Hope in the evening vanward paling down,  
 The one—the other younger Hope upspringing,  
 With the glancing morning for its crown.

There is no tyranny in truest love,  
 Nor rightful mastery in triumphant force;  
 And gentleness at hearth and board will prove  
 Felicity is born of their divorce:  
 Father and Child, the after and before,  
 Latest or first, whatever matters it?  
 Of mutual hopes, of mutual fears and loves,  
 Rounded and firm, their strands of life are  
 knit.

## III.

## THE TEACHER.

With reverent steps approach the soul that lies  
 Before thee, rude, unformed and full of life;  
 A chaos shrouding up a future world—  
 To order born—yet with itself at strife.  
 Peer for a while within the dark domain,  
 And see how temples mighty spring to sight,  
 Arks, palaces—all dead or living things  
 Doomed to climb up into the Heaven's light,  
 To heape the Earth or sail the outward Sea;  
 The giant mass of things to come at large,  
 Hovering about and shaping silently  
 Within that baby soul's unquiet marge.\*

In beauty shall that fresh-girt spirit build?  
 Shall harmony through all its chambers sing—  
 While rising day by day, and pile on pile,  
 Its topless worlds of heaven-ward wonders  
 spring?  
 Say thou—that broodest on its infant breast!  
 Whose eyes cry light through all its dawn-  
 ing void—  
 Or, with a double darkness would invest  
 Young thoughts, on labor without hope  
 employed.  
 'Tis there the truest work Earth knows is done—  
 Each hour, each instant buys the world an age  
 With glory bright: knits up its golden peace,  
 Or rends the web of time with endless rage.

Bend to the Teacher, bend, oh world, thy knees!  
 And pray him, blessed God's name, to be true!  
 Lest he for ever break that spirit's precious  
 peace,  
 And following millions in its fall undo.  
 A consecrated man—thou man of thought—  
 Keep clear thy master-soul in every act,  
 And be thy features pure as early light—  
 Crossing in power that spirit's undimmed  
 tract.

The world's dust ever shake from off thy feet,  
 When drawest thou to that white temple near,  
 Nor vex its amber cope with words unmeet  
 Of hate, or anger harsh, or unblest fear.

Listen the way the spirit seeks to go—  
 And watch its sacred steps, or firm or frail;  
 Haste not its pace, nor hinder it the path—  
 Smiling or sad, in changeful mirth or wail,  
 Remember, thou art standing by thy God!  
 Ere Earth has soiled his beauty, touched his  
 strength:  
 'Tis there th' Almighty makes his sweet abode;  
 And there, if undisturbed, would Heaven at  
 length  
 Take up and fix its everlasting rest:  
 Yea, Heaven with these, its children, fain  
 would dwell,

\* And in such indexes there is seen  
 The baby figure of the giant mass  
 Of things to come at large. *Troil. and Cressid.*

And, far-withdrawn within their stainless  
 breast,  
 Deliver thence, at times, a blessed oracle.

## IV.

## THE CITIZEN.

With plainness in thy daily pathway walk—  
 And disencumbered of excess: no other  
 Jostling, servile to none, none overstalk,  
 For, right and left, who passes is thy brother.

Let him who in thy countenance looks,  
 Find there in meek and softened majesty,  
 Thy Country writ, thy Brother and thy God;  
 And be each motion, forthright, calm and free.

Feel well with the poised ballot in thy hand,  
 Thine unmatched sov'reignty of right and  
 wrong—  
 'Tis thine to bless, or blast the waiting land,  
 To shorten up its life or make it long.

Who looks on thee, not hopeless, should behold,  
 A self-delivered, self-supported Man;  
 True to his being's mighty purpose—true  
 To a wisdom-blessed—a god-given plan.

No where within the great globe's skyey round—  
 Canst thou escape thy duty, grand and high,  
 A man unbadged, unbonneted, unbound—  
 Walk to the Tropic—to the Desert fly.

A full-fraught Hope upon thy shoulder leans,  
 And beats with thine, the heart of half the  
 world;  
 Ever behind thee walks the shining Past,  
 Before thee burns the star-stripe, high  
 unfurled.

## V.

## THE FARMER.

Full master of the liberal soil he treads,  
 With none to tithe, to crop, to third his beds  
 Of ripely-glowing fruit or yellow grain—  
 He knows what freedom is; undulled of pain  
 Looks on the sun and on the wheatfield looks,  
 Each glad and golden in the other's view;  
 Or, on the meadow listening to the sky  
 That bids its grasses thrive with starry dew.

To him there come in such still places,  
 Undimmed, majestical and fresh as life,  
 The elder forms, the antique mighty faces.  
 Which shone in council, stood aloft in strife—  
 When went the battle, billowy, past;  
 When high the standard to the sky was raised;  
 When rushed the horsemen with the rushing  
 blast,  
 And the red sword through shrouded valleys  
 blazed.

When Cities rising shake th' Atlantic shore—  
 Thou mighty Inland, calm with plenteous  
 peace,  
 Oh temper and assuage the wild uproar,  
 And bring the sick, vexed masses balmy ease.  
 On their red vision like an angel gleam,  
 And angel-like be heard amid their cries  
 Till they are stilled as is the summer's stream,  
 Majestical and still as summer skies.

When cloud-like whirling through the stormy  
 State  
 Fierce Revolutions rush in wild-orbed haste,  
 On the still highway stay their darkling course,  
 And soothe with gentle airs their fiery breast;  
 Slaking the anger of their chariot-wheels  
 In the cool flowings of the mountain brook,  
 While from the cloud the heavenward prophet  
 casts  
 His mantle's peace, and shines his better look.

Better to watch the live-long day  
 The clouds that come and go  
 Wearying the heaven thy idle through,  
 And fretting out its everlasting blue—  
 Than prowl through streets and sleep in  
 hungry dens  
 The beast should own, though known and  
 named as men's;  
 Though sadness on the woods may often lie,  
 And, wither to a waste the meadowy land—  
 Pure blows the air—and purer shines the sky,  
 For nearer always to Heaven's gate ye stand!

## VI.

## THE MECHANIC.

O, WHEN thou walkest by the river's brink,  
 Thy bulky figure outlined in the wave,  
 Or, on thine adze-staff resting, 'neath the ship  
 Thy strokes have shaped, or hear'st thou  
 loud and brave  
 The clangor of the boastful forge—Think not  
 To strength of limb, to sinews large and tough,  
 Are givenrights masterless and vantage-proof,  
 The sad, pale scholar and his puny hand  
 Idling his thoughts upon the idle sand,  
 May not possess as full: oh, maddened, drink  
 not  
 With greedy ear what selfish Passion pours:  
 His a sway peculiar is, no less than yours.

The inner world is his; the outer thine—  
 (And both are God's)—a world, maiden and  
 new,  
 To shape and finish forth, of iron and wood,  
 Of rock and brass, to fashion, mould and  
 hew—  
 In countless cunning forms to re-create—  
 Till the great God of order shall proclaim  
 it "Good!"  
 Proportioned fair, as in its first estate.

Let consecrate, whate'er it strikes, each blow—  
 From the small whisper of the tinkling smith,  
 Up to the big-voiced sledge that heaving slow  
 Roars 'gainst the massy bar, and tears  
 Its entrail, glowing, as with angry teeth—  
 Anchors that hold a world should thus-wise  
 grow.

In the First Builder's gracious spirit work,  
 Through hall, through enginery, and temples  
 meek,  
 In grandeur towered, or lapsing, beauty-sleek,  
 Let order and creative fitness shine:  
 Though mountains are no more to rear,  
 Though woods may rise again no more;  
 The noble task to re-produce is thine!  
 The spreading branch—the firm-set peak may  
 live  
 With thee, and in thy well-spiced labors thrive.

The untried forces of the air, the earth, the sea,  
 Wait at thy bidding: oh, compel their powers  
 To uses holy! Let them ever be  
 Servants to tend and bless these new-found  
 bowers;  
 And make them household workers, free and  
 swift,  
 On daily use—on daily service bent:  
 Her face again old Eden may uplift,  
 And God look down the open firmament.

## VII.

## THE MERCHANT.

Who gathers income in the narrow street,  
 Or, climbing, reaps it from the roughening  
 sea—  
 His anchor Truth should fix—should fill his  
 flowing sheet,  
 His weapon, helm and staff the Truth should  
 be.  
 Wrought out with lies each rafter of thine house,  
 Black with the falsehood every thread thou  
 wearest—  
 A subtle ruin, sudden overthrow,  
 For all thy household's fortune thou preparest.

Undimmed the man should through the trader  
 shine,  
 And show the soul unbabied by his craft:  
 Slight duties may not lessen but adorn,  
 The cedar's berries round the cedar's shaft.  
 The pettiest act will lift the doer up,  
 The mightiest cast him swift and headlong  
 down;  
 If one forget the spirit of his deed,  
 The other wears it as a living crown.

A grace, be sure, in all true duty dwells;  
 Humble or high, you always know it thus,  
 For beautiful in act, the foregone thought  
 Confirms its truth though seeming-ominous.

Pure hands and just, may therefore, well be laid  
On duties daily as the air we breathe;  
And Heaven amid the thorns of harshest Trade  
The laurel of its gentlest love may wreath.

## VIII.

## THE SOLDIER.

With grounded arms, and silent as the mountains,

Pause for thy quarrel at the marbled sea:  
And, when comes the ship o'er the curled wave bounding,

Remember that a brother in a foe may be.  
Thy battles are not wars but self-defences,  
Girding this Universal Home about—  
Least lion-wrong and subtle-fanged pretences  
Pierce to its heart and let the life-hope out.

Though sleeps the war-blade in the amorous sheath,

And the dumb cannon stretches at his leisure—

When strikes the shore a hostile foot—out-breathe

Ye grim, loud guns—ye fierce swords work your pleasure!

And sternly, in your stubborn socket set,  
For life or death—your hilt upon the steadfast land,

Your glance upon the foe, thou sure-set bayonet,  
Firm 'gainst a world's shock in your fastness stand!

This, this, remember still, thou son of war—  
The child of peace within his doorway seated  
Thine equal is—though beats the luring drum afar,

Or flies the meteor column, battle-heated.

Lo, in the calmness of that silent man,  
And in the peaceful sky-arch o'er him bending,

A pure repose—a more triumphal span  
Than sees the death-field 'mid its storms ascending.

## IX.

## THE STATESMAN.

Up to the Capitol who goes, a heart  
Should bear, state tyranny may not subdue:  
Wakening at dawn to fill its ample part,

It, ever, day by day, grows fresh and new,  
Nor sleeps through the mid-watches of the night,  
Though there the thankless world has left its smart—

Without some visions, beckoning and bright,  
That make him gladly to his bedside start.

Accursed who on the Mount of Rulers sits  
Nor gains some glimpses of a fairer day!  
Who knows not there, what there his soul befits,  
Thoughts that leap up and kindle far away  
The coming time! Who rather dulls the ear  
With brawling discord and a cloud of words;  
Owning no hopeful object, far or near,  
Save what the universal self affords.

He that with sway of empire would control  
The various millions, parted or amassed,  
Should hold in bounteous fee, an ample soul—  
Equal the first to know, nor less the last.  
At once whose general eye surveys as well  
The rank or desert waste—the golden field;  
Whose feet the mountain and the valley tread,  
Nor ever to the trials of the way will yield.

Deeper to feel, than quickly to express—  
And then alone in the consummate act—  
Reaps not the ocean, nor the free air tills,  
But keeps within his own peculiar tract:  
Confirms the State in all its needful right,  
Nor strives to draw within its general bound—

For gain or loss, for glory or distress,  
The rich man's hoard, the poor man's patchy ground.

Strip from the trunk that props the empire up,  
All weeds, all flowers that hide the simple shaft:

Plain as the heavens and pure as mid-day light  
Swell up its ample cope: nor there ingraft  
A single leaf nor draw a single line

To daze the eye, to coax the grasper's hand;  
Simple it rose—so simple let it rise—  
For ever, changeless simple let it stand!

## X.

## THE FRIEND.

In fortune, quality and temper mated—  
Let spirit, spirit choose—each suited best  
To th' other's moving mind or mind at rest;  
In kinship nearer than red blood related.

No castled shadow falls upon the heart,  
Darkening two faces each turned unto the other,

No lowly roof shuts in or out the heart's true brother:

Life deals to each, with equal chance, an equal part.

With mutual talk—of kingdoms past and gone,  
Of Rome republic-strong, and emperored Rome,  
Of Venice in her heart-struck days of doom—  
Old Israel pure, and scarlet Babylon;

Of muniments to guard a free-born State,  
And ships built proof against the world's worst shock,

Of battles won, white-handed peace to rock  
The coming age,—they share a mutual fate.

Sweet is the counsel of two noble souls!

Where sleeps no lie of thought with art  
concealed

Beneath the blood, nor in the face revealed:  
Friendship goes oftenest down on secret shoals!

## XI.

### THE PAINTER.

A SPIRIT moving through the Universe,  
On Heaven's errand or his own Nature's  
pure behest,

Would feed the beauty of his living wings  
On the free air, and on the sunset bright  
And on the dawning morn; should a later quest  
Detain him far through the heart of night,  
Some darker tints might creep across the light,  
Or a chill splendor, of the moonbeams born,  
Dying in gloom or wakening into morn.

Lighting by chance amid the haunts of men—  
Though yearning to get purely forth again—  
Their dusty shouts would not sully, but renew  
Rather, the glory when it had wandered through.  
To pause beneath a mountain, should he choose,  
Its shadows would be portion of the many  
hues:—

And, up returning to his hearth-sky post,  
And, dwelling, once again, within his  
native coast,  
The mountain and the sea, the setting sun,  
The storm, the face of men, and the calm moon  
Would live again upon the pictured vans and  
in the glowing crest

Of that High Spirit, moving or at rest.

Be, thou, oh Painter, various, pure and free,  
As Heaven's boundless and wide-winged  
minister:

Moving abroad, thy spirit let confer  
With whispering beauty, born of Earth, of  
Air or Sea.

Look on the earth that breaks about thy feet,  
In valleys and in mountains starry:

Look on the woods, amid whose colored bowers,  
The dark bright seasons, else departed, tarry.  
See Heaven shining through the pale blue sky  
On some fair day of dreamy summer,  
Smiling upon a gentle hour just dead,  
Or kindling welcome for a gentler comer.

Are there no spirits, kin to light and beauty,  
Springing to cheer these sweet and suited  
haunts?

Faces of love and forms of eldest duty,  
Which, unexpressed, the soul thereafter  
pants?

Fill thou, the mansion of thy Father-land  
With hues to gladden in its hours of need,  
With glancing shapes that every fairness  
breed,  
And pour a larger life from thy creative hand!

## XII.

### THE SCULPTOR.

LEAP up into the light, ye living Forms!

And plant 'mid men your birthright feet;  
Angry and fierce as the maned thunder's storms,  
And as the lightning beautiful and fleet.  
Of quick and thoughtful souls the truest  
thoughts,

Born of the marble at Heaven's happy hour—  
Ye blessed Realities! who strike the doubts  
Begot of speech, dumb, with your better  
power.

Human and life-like with no sense of pain,  
Come forth, crowned heroes of the early age,  
Chieftain and soldier, senator and sage—  
Benignant, wise and brave again!

Would the soul clothe itself in elder gloom—  
Let stand upon the cliff and in the shadowy  
grove,

The tawny ancient of the warrior race,  
With dusky limb and flushing face,  
Diffusing Autumn through the stilly place—  
For battle stern, or soothed for love.

Or should a spirit of a larger scope

Seek to express itself in sacred stone:

Cast, life-long, on the mountain-slope

Or seat upon the starry mountain-cone,

Colossal and resigned, the gloomy gods

Eying at large their lost abodes,

Towering and swart and knit in every limb,

With brows on which the tempest lives,

With eyes wherein the past survives;

Gloomy and battailous and grim.

Think not too much what other climes have  
done,

What other ages: with painful following,  
weary,

Each step thou takest darkens thy natural sun,  
And makes thy coming course, thy by-gone,  
dreary.

Let the soul in thee lift its awful front,  
Facing the Universe that stands before it;

Beaten by day and night and tempests' brunt,  
All shapes—all glorious passions shall cross  
o'er it.

Forth from their midst some forms will leap  
That other souls have never disencumbered,  
And up shall spring through all the broad-set  
land,

The fair white people of thy love unnumbered.

## XIII.

### THE JOURNALIST.

As shakes the canvass of a thousand ships,  
Struck by a heavy land-breeze, far at sea—  
Ruffle the thousand broad-sheets of the land,  
Filled with the people's breath of potency;

A thousand images the hour will take,  
 From him who strikes, who rules, who speaks,  
 who sings;  
 Many within the hour their grave to make—  
 Many to live, far in the heart of things.

A dark-dyed spirit he who coins the time,  
 To virtue's wrong, in base disloyal lies—  
 Who makes the morning's breath, the evening's  
 tide,  
 The utterer of his blighting forgeries.

How beautiful who scatters, wide and free,  
 The gold-bright seeds of loved and loving  
 truth!

By whose perpetual hand, each day, supplied—  
 Leaps to new life the empire's heart of youth.

To know the instant and to speak it true,  
 Its passing lights of joy, its dark, sad cloud,  
 To fix upon the unnumbered gazers' view,  
 Is to thy ready hand's broad strength allowed.

There is an in-wrought life in every hour,  
 Fit to be chronicled at large and told—  
 'Tis thine to pluck to light its secret power,  
 And on the air its many-colored heart unfold.

The angel that in sand-dropped minutes lives,  
 Demands a message cautious as the ages—  
 Who stuns, with dusk-red words of hate, his ear,  
 That mighty power to boundless wrath  
 enrages.

Hell not the quiet of a Chosen Land,  
 Thou grimy man over thine engine bending;  
 The spirit pent that breathes the life into its  
 limbs,  
 Docile for love is tyrannous in rending.

Obey, Rhinoceros! an infant's hand,  
 Leviathan! obey the fisher mild and young,  
 Vexed Ocean! smile, for on thy broad-beat  
 sand  
 The little curlew pipes his shrilly song.

#### XIV.

#### THE MASSES.

WHEN, wild and high, the uproar swells  
 From crowds that gather at the set of day;  
 When square and market roar in stormy play,  
 And fields of men, like lions, shake their fells  
 Of savage hair; when, quick and deep, call  
 out the bells  
 Through all the lower Heaven ringing,  
 As if an earthquake's shock  
 The city's base should rock,  
 And set its troubled turrets singing:—  
 Remember, Men! on massy strength relying,  
 There is a heart of right  
 Not always open to the light,  
 Secret and still and force-defying.

In vast assemblies calm, let order rule,  
 And, every shout a cadence owning,  
 Make musical the vexed wind's moaning,  
 And be as little children at a singing-school.

But, when, thick as night, the sky is crusted o'er,  
 Stifling life's pulse and making Heaven an  
 idle dream,  
 Arise! and cry, up through the dark, to God's  
 own throne:

Your faces in a furnace glow,  
 Your arms uplifted for the death-ward blow—  
 Fiery and prompt as angry angels show:  
 Then draw the brand and fire the thunder-gun!  
 Be nothing said and all things done!

Till every cobwebbed corner of the common-  
 weal  
 Is shaken free, and, creeping to its scabbard  
 back the steel,  
 Let's shine again God's rightful sun!

#### XV.

#### THE REFORMER.

MAN of the Future! on the eager headland  
 standing,  
 Gazing far off into the outer sea,  
 Thine eye, the darkness and the billows rough  
 commanding,  
 Beholds a shore, bright as the Heaven itself  
 may be;  
 Where temples, cities, homes and haunts  
 of men,  
 Orchards and fields spread out in orderly  
 array,  
 Invite the yearning soul to thither flee,  
 And there to spend in boundless peace its  
 happier day,

By passion and the force of earnest thought,  
 Borne up and platformed at a height,  
 Where 'gainst thy feet the force of earth and  
 heaven are brought;  
 Yet, so into the frame of empire wrought,  
 Thou, stout man, can'st not thence be severed,  
 Till ruled and rulers, fiends or men, are taught  
 And feel the truths by thee delivered.

Seize by its horns the shaggy Past,  
 Full of uncleanness; Heave with mountain  
 cast,  
 Its carcase down the black and wide abyss—  
 That opens day and night its gulfy precipice,  
 By faded empires, projects old and dead  
 For ever in its noisy hunger fed:  
 But rush not, therefore, with a brutish blindness  
 Against the 'established bulwarks of the world;  
 Kind be thyself although unkindness  
 Thy race to ruin dark and suffering long,  
 has hurled.  
 For many days of light, and smooth repose,  
 Twixt storm and weathery sadness inter-  
 vene—

Thy course is Nature's; on thy triumph flows,  
Assured, like hers, though noiseless and serene.

Wake not at midnight and proclaim the day,  
When lightning only flashes o'er the way:  
Pauses and starts and strivings towards an end,  
Are not a birth, although a god's birth they portend.

Be patient therefore like the old broad earth  
That bears the guilty up, and through the night  
Conducts them gently to the dawning light—  
Thy silent hours shall have as great a birth!

## XVI.

## THE POOR MAN.

FREE paths and open tracts about us lie,  
'Gainst Fortune's spite, though deadliest to undo:

On him who droops beneath the saddest sky,  
Hopes of a better time must flicker through.

No yoke that evil hours would on him lay,  
Can bow to earth his unreturning look;  
The ample fields through which he plods his way  
Are but his better Fortune's open book.

hough the dark smithy's stains becloud his brow,

His limbs the dank and sallow dungeon claim;  
The forge's light may take the halo's glow,  
An angel knock the fetters from his frame.

In deepest needs he never should forget  
The patient Triumph that beside him walks,  
Waiting the hour, to earnest labor set,  
When, face to face, his merrier Fortune talks.

Plant in thy breast a measureless content,  
Thou Poor Man, cramped with want or racked with pain,  
Good Providence, on no harsh purpose bent,  
Has brought thee there, to lead thee back again.

No other bondage is upon thee cast [hand;  
Save that wrought out by thine own erring  
By thine own act, alone, thine image placed—  
Poorest or President, choose thou to stand.

A man—a man through all thy trials show!  
Thy feet against a soil that never yielded  
Other than life, to him that struck a rightful blow  
In shop or street, warring or peaceful-fielded!

## XVII.

## THE SCHOLAR.

BOSOMED in peace and far apart from crowds—  
Who sits till hands grow wan and eyes grow dim,

Pausing his pulse and stirring not a limb,  
Though paling fast toward the dead man's shrouds?

'Tis thou, 'tis thou—thou foolish scholar's heart—  
[flows,  
Forgetting round thee what a world there  
How, ever in and out, its mighty eddy goes—  
And yet thou sittest on its edge, so still, apart.

Who thinks that dull dead books have deepest life,

Calls them by names of awed delight or gladness,  
[ness,

With one or other argues with a joyful mad-  
And with the tidiest pillows for a wife?

Oh, thou poor, idle moon-struck heart of youth—  
Has the keen air no better wit brought to thee;

This folly in this land will sure undo thee—  
In spite of nobleness and worth, of gentlest truth!

Go cast these follies in the barren sea:

Seal up, for ever seal, the hateful leaves,  
And turn thine eyes where light no more bereaves  
[free.

Their orbs, and lift thine arms up strong and  
Away, away all gentle thoughts shall glide,

All happiest fancies night or morning born;—  
It may be thou wilt feel awhile forlorn,  
And drop, one day, unmissed, beneath the hurrying tide!

## XVIII.

## THE PREACHER.

EVER aslant the sky behold a shape,  
Leaning at length upon the mastered air!

Man-like in form and yet divinely fair,  
About his head a golden glory glows,  
And fair as morning every feature shows.

His feet are toward the earth, and upward thrown

His stretched and yearning arms appeal to God;  
With God he talks at that far height—with God alone.

Athwart all troubles of the day or night or clouds,  
[tempest's shrouds—

Athwart eclipse of sun or moon, or the dun  
Behold that radiant figure streaming,

'Twixt Earth and Heaven, and Heaven and Earth,  
[infant at its birth,

An angel mighty—meek as the swathed  
All the mid-region from its gloom redeeming.

'Tis Christ, 'tis sacred Christ who there is beaming.  
[ple-wall

Oh, ye who sentried stand upon the tem-  
Holy, and nearer to the glory's golden fall—

Moon-like possess and shed at large its rays—

The wide world knitting in a web of light,  
Whose every thread the gladd'ning truth makes bright;

Peace, love and universal brotherhood,  
Good will to man and faith in God the good.

Withered be he, the false one of the brood,  
Who, husbandman of evil, scatters strife,

Brambling and harsh, upon the field of life:  
But deeper cursed whose secret hand

Plucks on to doom the safeguards of the land,  
Freedom, and civil forms and sacred Rights  
That conscience owns : he, conscience-stung,  
who plights

His voice 'gainst these, should sheer-down fall  
From off the glory of the temple-wall,  
Smitten by God as false to truth and love  
And all the sacred links that bind the heavens  
above

And man beneath : a withered Paul,  
Apostleless, beyond recall !

Rather, with blessings and the bonds of life  
Let Heaven's good workman bind together  
The house that roofs us on this dear, dear plot  
of earth,

An arbor in the genial sun,  
A stronghold in the tyrannous weather :  
Kindly and loving brethren every one,  
All equal—all alike who thither tend,  
Where all may dwell together without end—  
And as our course must be, so let it be begun.

But shrink not, therefore, from the coward age,  
That shows, in mockery shows, its hideous  
face at times, [sabbath-chimes ;  
And crosses with its cursed din the very  
O, smite and buffet with a holy rage  
Its brassy cheeks and brow of icy coldness—  
Dash and confound it with the storm-cloud's  
boldness [trembles,  
That frowns and speaks till every house-roof  
And face to face no more dissembles  
The God-fear coiled within the crusted heart !  
Brutish the truth and let its four-edged dart  
Cut to the quick, and, cut through every armor,  
Unbosom to the light the Satan-charmer !

Ye holy Voices spher'd in middle air !  
Lower than angels, nor as they so fair,  
Yet quiring God's behest with truth and  
power—

Pitch your blest speech, or high or low,  
That angels may its language own and know,  
Through the round Heaven to which it rises,  
And ever on the earth may fall in glad surprises,  
The spring-sweet music of a sudden shower.

Heaven shall bless thee and the earth shall  
bless,

And up through the close, dark death-hour  
thou shall spring [wing—

With fragrant parting, and heaven-cleaving  
To ask, nor ask in vain, thy Christ's caress !

## XIX.

### THE POET.

THE mighty heart that holds the world at full,  
Lodging in one embrace the father and the  
child,

The toiler, reaper, sufferer, rough or mild,  
All kin of earth, can rightly ne'er grow dull ;  
For on its tasks, in this late age, are laid

That stir its pulses at a thousand points ;  
Its ruddy haunts a thousand hopes invade,

And Fear runs close to smutch what Hope  
anoins.

On thee, the mount, the valley and the sea,  
The forge, the field, the household call on thee.

Men—bountiful as trees in every field,

Men—striving each, a separate billow, to be  
seen,

Men—to whose eyes a later truth revealed  
Dazzling, cry out in anguish quick and keen,  
Ask to be championed in their newborn thoughts,  
To have an utterance adequate and bold—

Ask that the age's dull sepulchral stone  
Back from their Saviour's burial-place be  
rolled :

All pressing to be heard—all lay on thee  
Their cause, and make their love the joyful fee.

There sits not in the wilderness' edge,  
In the dusk lodges of the wintry North,  
Nor crouches in the rice-field's slimy sedge—  
Nor on the cold, wide waters ventures forth—

Who waits not in the pauses of his toil,  
With hope that spirits in the air may sing ;  
Who upward turns not, at propitious times,  
Breathless, his silent features listening :  
In desert and in lodge, on marsh and main,  
To feed his hungry heart and conquer pain.

To strike or bear, to conquer or to yield,  
Teach thou ! O, topmost crown of duty, teach  
What fancy whispers to the listening ear,  
At hours, when tongue nor taint of care im-  
peach

The fruitful calm of greatly silent hearts ;  
When all the stars for happy thought are set,  
And, in the secret chambers of the soul,

All blessed powers of joyful truth are met.  
Though calm and garlandless thou may'st  
appear,  
The world shall know thee for its crownèd seer.

Mirth in an open eye may sit as well,  
As sadness in a close and sober face :  
In thy broad welcome both may fitly dwell,  
Nor jostle either from its nestling-place.

Tears, free as showers, to thee may come as  
blessed,

As smiling, of the happy sunshine born,  
And cloaked-up trouble, in his turn, caressed  
Be taught to look a little less forlorn ;  
Thy heart-gates, mighty, open either way,  
Come they to feast or go they forth to pray.

Gather all kindreds of this boundless realm  
To speak a common tongue in thee ! Be thou—  
Heart, pulse, and voice, whether pent hate  
o'erwhelm

The stormy speech or young love whisper low.  
Cheer them, immitigable battle-drum !

Forth, truth-mailed, to the old unconquered  
field—

And lure them gently to a laurelled home,  
In notes softer than lutes or viols yield.  
Fill all the stops of life with tuneful breath,  
Closing their lids, bestow a dirge-like death !



WAKONDAH, THE MASTER OF LIFE.

"We have already noticed the superstitious feelings with which the Indians regarded the Black Hills; but this immense range of mountains (the Chippewyan or Rocky Mountains) which divides all that they know of the world and gives birth to such mighty rivers, is still more an object of awe and veneration. They call it, "The Crest of the World," and think that Wakondah or the Master of Life, as they designate the Supreme Being, has his residence among these aerial heights."—ASTORIA, *Vol. I*, p. 265.

# WAKONDAH, THE MASTER OF LIFE.

[The following stanzas are to be received as the incomplete (and, no doubt, very imperfect), fragment of a work, which opportunity and a mood, equal to what seems to the author the requirements of the subject, could alone conclude. This portion is published, with the hope that the author might feel himself, in its further progress, borne forward by something of the friendly impulse that grows from favor, and should not turn back, heart-smitten, to find that his was the only eye which dwelt with cheerful regard upon the ample look-out of its Future.]

## I.

THE Moon ascends the vaulted sky to-night;  
With a slow motion full of pomp ascends,  
But mightier than the Moon that o'er it bends  
A Form is dwelling on the mountain height  
That boldly intercepts the struggling light—  
With darkness nobler than the planet's fire:  
A gloom and dreadful grandeur that aspire  
To match the cheerful Heaven's far-shining  
night.

## II.

Great God! how fearful to the gazing eye!  
Behold the bow that o'er his shoulder hangs,  
But ah! winged with what agonies and pangs  
Must arrows from its sounding bow-string fly;—  
An arc of death and warfare in the sky.  
He plants a spear upon the rock that clangs  
Like thunder; and a blood-red token hangs,  
A death-dawn, on its point aspiring high.

## III.

Upon his brow a garland of the woods he wears,  
A crown of oak leaves broader than their wont;  
Above his dark eye waves and dims its brunt—  
Its feathers darker than a thousand Fears—  
A cruel eagle's plume: High, high it rears,  
Nor ever did the bird's rash youth surmount  
A pitch of power like that o'ershadowed front  
On which the plume its storm-like station bears.

## IV.

Filled with the glory thus above him rolled—  
How would some Chinook wandering through  
the night  
In cedern helm and elk-skin armor dight  
Be pierced with blank amazement dumb and  
cold:

How, fear-struck, scan the Spirit's awful  
mould;—

The gloomy front, the death-dispelling eye,  
And bulk that swallows up the sea-blue sky—  
Tall as the uncluded tower of old.

## Δ V.

Transcendant Shape! But hark, for lo a sound  
—Like that of rivers and of mingled winds  
Through forests raging 'till the tumult finds  
Or makes an outlet free from hedge or bound,—  
Breaks from the Holder of the mountain-ground.  
Oh, listen sadly to the urgent cry!—  
No mightier shadow of a strength gone by  
Through the whole perishable Earth is found.

## VI.

The Spirit lowers and speaks: "Tremble ye  
wild Woods!  
Ye Cataracts! your organ-voices sound!  
Deep Craggs, in earth by massy tenures bound,  
Oh, Earthquake, level flat! The peace that  
broods  
Above this world and steadfastly eludes  
Your power, howl Winds and break;—the  
peace that mocks  
Dismay 'mid silent streams and voiceless  
rocks—  
Through wildernesses, cliffs and solitudes.

## VII.

"Night-shadowed Rivers—lift your dusky hands  
And clap them harshly with a sullen roar!  
Ye thousand Pinnacles and Steeps deplore  
The glory that departs! Above you stands  
Ye Lakes with azure waves and snowy strands,  
A Power that utters forth his loud behest  
Till mountain, lake and river shall attest  
The puissance of a Master's large commands!"

## VIII.

So spake the Spirit, with a wide-cast look  
Of bounteous power and cheerful majesty;  
As if he caught a sight of either sea  
And all the subject realm between:—Then shook  
His brandished arms, his stature scarce could  
brook,  
Its confine; swelling wide, it seemed to grow  
As grows a cedar on a mountain's brow  
By the mad air in ruffling breezes took.

## IX.

The woods are deaf and will not be aroused—  
The mountains are asleep, they hear him not,  
Nor from deep-founded silence can be wrought,  
Tho' herded bison on their steeps have browsed :  
Beneath their banks in darkness stillness housed  
The rivers loiter like a calm-bound sea ;  
In anchored nuptials to dumb apathy  
Cliff, wilderness, and solitude, are spoused.

## X.

Then shone afar Wakondah's dreadful eyes,  
With fire and lurid splendor, like the stars  
That dazzle earth belolding them ;—the wars  
That noble spirits wage with enemies,  
Flash in his aspect through its cloudy guise ;—  
His tower-high stature quakes in all its parts,  
And from his brow a mighty sorrow starts—  
A sorrow mightier than the midnight skies.

## XI.

" Oh, wherefore tremble ? Wherefore should  
I fear  
Because these creatures now, by chance,  
are dumb,  
Nor longer to my bidding with obeisance come ;  
As when, in times to startle and revere,  
Templed on high within this cloudy sphere,  
With wondering worship of the dusky wood—  
The quivered stream, the dark-eyed solitude—  
I stamped my image on the rolling year.

## XII.

" At eve or morn whene'er I walked these hills  
From ridge to ridge they shook, from peak  
to peak ;  
A thousand warrior tribes that dare not speak  
Lay in my shadow with the awe that chills,  
Dumb with the fear that boundless force instills.  
Wakondah was a god and thunderer then,  
Nor bent his bow nor launched his shafts in  
vain—  
Lord of each power that terrifies or thrills.

## XIII.

" Your dark foundations felt my framing hand ;  
Nor can your sun-smote summits e'er forget  
By whom their flood-resisting roots were set—  
By whose clear skill their skyey power was  
planned.  
Through all the borders of the lofty land—  
Mountains ! I call upon you to attest  
Whose habitable wish upon your crest  
Reared up his throne and fixed his Godhead  
stand.

## XIV.

" My spirit stretched itself from East to West,  
With a winged terror or a mighty joy ;  
And, when his matchless bow-shafts would  
annoy,  
I urged the dark red hunter in his quest  
Of pard or panther with a gloomy zest,

And while through darkling woods they  
swiftly fare—  
Two seeming creatures of the oak-shadowed  
air,  
I sped the game and fired the follower's breast.

## XV.

" Outsounding with my thunder thy loud vaunt,  
Thou, too, hast known me, mighty Cataract !—  
When rocks in headlong motion thou hast  
tracked,  
Like some huge creature goaded from his haunt,  
Along the mountain passes rough and slaunt—  
Who makes his foaming way while all around  
He awes the circuit with a shuddering  
sound :—  
So ragest Thou and lift'st Thy sounding front !"

## XVI.

Power crumbles from the arm, and from the brow  
Glory declines with surety swift as light :  
Like towers that loose in storms their  
wondrous might,  
Dark principalities of air must bow  
And have their strength and terror smitten low :  
The hour draws nigh, Wakondah, when on  
thine  
Yon full orb'd fire unpaled, shall cease to shine  
Uplifted longer in Heaven's western glow !

## XVII.

" Lo ! where our foe up through these vales  
ascends,  
Fresh from the embraces of the swelling sea,  
A glorious, white and shining Deity.  
Upon our strength his deep blue eye he bends,  
With threatenings full of thought and steadfast  
ends,  
While desolation from his nostril breathes,  
His glittering rage he scornfully unsheathes  
And to the startled air its splendor lends.

## XVIII.

" The nation-queller in their length of days—  
The slaughterer of the tribes art thou ! the  
rude  
Remorseless, vengeful foe of natural blood  
And wood-born strength reared up amid the maze  
Of forest walks and unimprisoned ways ;—  
The dwellers in unsteeped wastes ; the host  
Of warriors stark and cityless, whose boast  
Was daring proof 'gainst torture that betrays."

## XIX.

Oh wrestle not, Wakondah, with the Time ;  
The Time resistless in its present hour  
Of rugged force, of multitudinous power  
To make itself triumphant o'er the clime,  
Where streams are endless, mountains as sublime  
And valleys shadowy and calm as ever  
Yet tasked a Godhead's high and bright en-  
deavor,  
Since first the world was in its mighty prime.

## XX.

Far through the desert, see his fiery hoof  
 Speeds like the pale white courser of St. John,  
 With rage and dreadful uproar thundering on !  
 At every step old shadows fly aloof,  
 While on and on he bounds with strength enough  
 To master valley, hill and echoing plain—  
 Cheered by the outcry of a savage train  
 Of white-browed hunters armed in deadly proof.

## XXI.

"Through the far shadows of the gathering  
 years  
 I see, visions denied to mortal eyes;  
 Phantoms of dreadful aspect that arise  
 Cold with the anguish of their wintry fears;  
 And struggling forth from out a gulf of tears  
 And blood by banded nations vainly shed,  
 Above them all a single Wo its head  
 Lifts high and awes its customary peers.

## XXII.

"I say not now what name that Wo shall bear,  
 What mournful omen on its front is written,  
 What pillared glories by its sad rage smitten—  
 Shall fall to earth, and all th' embracing air  
 With its dread sound of wasting tumult tear;  
 These are the future's—voiceless let them rest  
 Deep in the shadow of her silent breast,  
 'Till vengeance bid the sons of men—Prepare !"

## XXIII.

So spake the Spirit ; but I deemed I saw  
 That in the language of his gloomy eye,  
 That made a falsehood of his augury.  
 I know that Heaven is true to its great law ;  
 I know how deep and damnable a flaw  
 Has through its righteous code of truth been  
 rent  
 By erring swords and hands with blood  
 besprent—  
 And this it is that fills my soul with awe.

## XXIV.

And yet, oh God ! I dare to ask of thee  
 Pardon and palmy days for this dear land ;  
 The glory of thy sun, thy shadowing hand,  
 In mercy spread abroad from sea to sea,  
 That all its wide vast empire so may be,  
 From loud Atlantic unto Oregon  
 An orb of power, and never to be won  
 Nor yielded up, a home and fortress to the free !

## XXV.

"The past is past !" Wakondah spoke "the past  
 Is past : to others lifeless, cold and dumb  
 Beyond repeal, I bid it's shadows come  
 Swiftly before me, nor care I how vast  
 That which I gendured shall appear at last  
 As when at first it's dim colossal form,  
 Huge, rude, mis-shapen, noisy as a storm—  
 Rose up, by me called upward and amassed.

## XXVI.

"Falling or rising through the azure air—  
 Green dells that into silence stretch away ;  
 Ye woods that counterfeit the hues of day  
 With colors e'en the day could not repair  
 From his wide fount of morning dyes and fair  
 Evening or noon ; innumerable rampant life  
 With which this waste or verdant world is rife—  
 As yet were not ; the offspring of a god-like care.

## XXVII.

"Oh, backward how that youthful glory gleams—  
 Ye creatures of my undiminished arm,  
 When shadowing hills were lifted like a charm,  
 And at a word their duly measured beams  
 Sprung to their chambers in the mountain seams.  
 This was no task-work, nor a toil of joy  
 Thus an immortal puissance to employ  
 In building worlds and pouring ocean-streams.

## XXVIII.

"Oh ! might and beauty of the forming earth—  
 Shaped by a hand upholding and divine,  
 For such was then Wakondah even then !—  
 With hill and mountain masses bursting forth,  
 And struggling all along the blue-aired North—  
 With smiling valleys winding far between,  
 And rivers singing all aloud, though yet  
 unseen :  
 While I, their sire, hung joyous o'er their birth.

## XXIX.

"A fearful and a perilous joy was mine,  
 When brooding thus above the seething world  
 I saw the striving giants swiftly hurled,  
 With thunderous noises to and fro ; a constant  
 line  
 Of furnaced lightnings, ever forced to shine  
 Quick, fierce and kindling through the shape-  
 less gloom,  
 Made the dull void some creature disentomb,  
 And cheered its birth-pangs with a fire benign.

## XXX.

"What voice of portent shook the gulf that held  
 The uncreated majesty of woods,  
 The calm deep beauty of the solitudes  
 Of boundless fields ; and from the deep compelled  
 That Behemoth, whose roar has lately quelled  
 Nations in panoply of arms arrayed ?  
 Amid the sounding mass and undismayed  
 By striving rivers, shock of hills impelled

## XXXI.

"'Gainst hills and wild beasts raging into light,  
 'Wakondah stood, and o'er the tumult bent,  
 It's Ruler and it's steadfast firmament.  
 He breaks the bondage of the cruel Night  
 That wraps them in its folds, and like a blight  
 Of storms that rage and thunder but to save  
 And purify, he burst your rock-ribbed grave—  
 The matchless Master of redeeming might."

## XXXII.

The Spirit ceased and all along the air,  
 From where in speechless majesty he stood—  
 On either hand through all the solitude  
 Of glittering peaks and dusky vales, to where  
 The wild beasts held afar their anxious lair—  
 A sudden silence like a tempest fell;  
 A silence and a gloom that none can tell—  
 A calm too dread for mortal things to bear.

## XXXIII.

No cloud was on the moon, yet on His brow  
 A deepening shadow fell, and on his knees  
 That shook like tempest stricken mountain-  
 trees,  
 His heavy head descended sad and low:

Like a high city smitten by the blow  
 That secret earthquakes strike and toppling  
 falls  
 With all its arches, towers and cathedrals,  
 In swift and unconjectured overthrow.

## XXXIV.

Thenceforth I did not see the Spirit lift  
 Again that night his great discrowned head,  
 Nor heard a voice: He was not with the dead  
 Nor with the living, for the mighty gift  
 Of boundless power was passing like a rift  
 Of stormy clouds that still will have a tongue  
 Ere yet the winds have wafted them along  
 To endless silence, whitherward they drift.

THE END OF WAKONDAH.

THE CAREER OF  
PUFFER HOPKINS.





# THE CAREER OF PUFFER HOPKINS.

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## PREFACE.

It was the hope of the author when he began the following work, that he might be able to produce a book, in some slight degree, characteristic and national in its features. Now, that it is completed, he fears it may be found far short of that hope, and unequal even to his own feeble purposes. He had a design which seemed, in some of its circumstances, to partake a little of utility and truth, but which, he is afraid, is not made quite so clear to the reader.

Where he has attempted to shade and soften, he may have blurred; and where he would have cut sharp lines and effected contrasts, it may prove that he has merely mangled character and story. Imperfect as is his own judgment in such a case, he thinks he can discover one or two places at least, where more should have been said and less done; or more done and less said. He wishes only that he had sufficient influence with the reader to persuade him to guard against a single false alarm frequently raised against works of this class. The constancy with which the charge of caricaturing Nature is brought against writers who attempt the humorous, should lead us to suspect—particularly as Cervantes, Smollett, Fielding, and Scott, to say nothing of more recent eminent examples, have all, at one time or another, been included in the accusation—that there is less justice and more assumption in the charge, than seems at first possible.

These authors all wrote from a sure instinct, a profound knowledge of their art. They knew very well, or must have early learned, that the spirit of the accusation would drive all literature upon a servile transcript of every-day objects, and most effectually stifle every work claiming to be a work of art. It was their province, they knew, to discover in nature the germe of character, and to expand it by processes of which genius is master, into a livelier, truer development than nature, in her ordinary moods, presents. To group, to separate, to soften and elevate nature, is allowed to the author as well as the painter; and the charge of caricaturing should be brought only where Nature is lost sight of and fails to furnish the original staple out of which the product is wrought.

It happened to the author, during the progress of the early parts of this Tale through the pages of a magazine (*ARCTURUS*), to be engaged in the advocacy of a law of International Copyright; a cause which he will not fail to urge at all proper opportunities. As it was not found altogether convenient to answer what he advanced, an attack was made, by a new sort of evasive logic, upon the present work. What kind of generalship it would be to set out with the valiant purpose of the conquest of Mexico and proceed to its execution by march-

ing a couple of thousand miles in directly the opposite course, and opening a brisk cannonade upon the Heights of Abraham, for example—the reader may determine. The author only expresses a wish that the work may be judged by itself, apart from collateral issues and distracting personalities. In that spirit he believes it will be judged by all fair-minded and capable critics. Whatever the issue may be, he can not altogether regret that he has written it, since it has afforded him an opportunity to serve, in a very humble way, objects of which he ought not to be ashamed.

NEW YORK, Oct. 28th, 1842.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE PLATFORM.

To say that the townspeople of this mighty metropolis were in a state of greater excitement and activity on a certain night in a certain month of November—which it is not necessary more particularly to define—than they are on certain other nights of periodical recurrence, would be to do the said townspeople arrant injustice, and to establish for the chronicler of the following authentic history, at the very outset, a questionable character for truth and plain speaking. On this immediate occasion, however, there was, it must be confessed, a commendable degree of agitation and enthusiasm visible, in almost every quarter of the city. Crowds were emerging from lane, alley, and thoroughfare, and pouring into the central streets in the direction of the Hall; sometimes in knots of three, four, or more, all engaged in earnest conversation, in a loud key, with vehement gesture, and faces considerably discolored by excitement. The persons composing these various peripatetic and deliberative groups, could not be said to be of any single class or profession, but mingled together indiscriminately, much after the fashion of a country storekeeper's stock, where a bale of fourth-price flannel neighbors a piece of first-quality linen, and knots of dainty and gallant wine-glasses are brought into a state of sociable confusion, with a gathering of hard-headed plebeian stone bottles. Although all tending the same way and on the same errand, let no man be so rash and

intemperate as to imagine that no distinctions were observed; that certain lines and demarcations were not maintained; and that broadcloth was not careful here, as usual, not to have its fine nap destroyed by the jostling of homespun.

The knot of tough-fisted mechanics kept its course, roaring out its rough sarcasms and great gusts of invective, while the company of well-dressed gentlemen bound for the same harbor, glided more quietly along, their talk scarcely disturbed by the extravagance of a rippling phrase or an oath.

Here a substantial citizen advanced in great state and dignity, alone, toward the place of gathering, unless his horn-topped walking-stick might be held as suitable company for so grave and dignified a personage; and again a thoughtful young gentleman might be discovered, striding along with his hands thrust deep in his pockets, conning a few common-places for a speech.

This various crowd has at length reached its destination, and scampering up the stairs of a large mis-shapen building, with no little heat and racket, finds itself landed in a spacious saloon, facing a raised platform, protected in front by a rough railing, with some score of vacant chairs occupying the floor of the same, and as many stout candles ranged against the rail. Beneath the platform is a small square table, holding a capacious inkstand, ornamented with two or three huge gray goose-quills. Abreast of the table are stretched a number of rude benches, to afford accommodation for such infirm, ease-loving, and sedentary individuals, as may see fit to take possession of them; and taken possession of they are at a very early stage of the proceedings, first by a squad of precocious shipwrights' prentices, secondly by a broad-bottomed dairyman who was left at the Hall in the afternoon by one of his own wagons from Bloomingdale, and thirdly by a rout of scrambling fellows, from no place in particular, who push and jostle and clamor their best for the occupancy. The meeting is on the eve of being organized, when in marches a well-fed uppish man—the very citizen that was alone with his cane in the street—who, contemplating the crowd with an air of austere regard, urges himself toward one end of the platform, where he meets a scraggy man, smartly dressed, and displaying from the pillory of a sharp-edged clean shirt-collar, a very knowing countenance extended to the audience, and engages in a whispered conversation, the concluding clause whereof embodies this sterling sentiment (enforced by the thrusting of a roll at the same time into the open hand of the scraggy gentleman): "There's a current ten—make me a vice, will ye?" The scraggy man thereupon cocks his eye significantly, and the stout citizen, slipping away, gets into the outskirts of the crowd, where he stares at the platform and the caudles—the political heaven of ambitious stout gentlemen—as if they were the most remarkable objects in creation, and as if he was

perfectly unconscious of the objects for which the meeting was then and there convened.

In due time the meeting was called to order, and the innocent stout gentleman established himself, with five others, upon the platform, as an assistant presiding officer—a vice—of the same. Silence was proclaimed, and a dwarfish little man, with one of the oddest countenances in the world, was lifted upon a high stool by the mob, and commenced reading a manuscript, which he dignified with the name of the "Report of the Anti-Aqueduct Committee, appointed by the citizens of New York, at a large and respectable meeting held at Foggie Hall," &c., &c., in which was furnished a certain amount of statistics (taken from the 'Cyclopedia'): a decoction of mouldy jokes (from the newspapers): and a modicum of energetic slang—a direct emanation from the inventive genius of the reader of the report.

This was a great, a tremendous question—suggested the Anti-Aqueduct manuscript—a question, to come to the point at once, involving the rights of mankind, the interests of universal humanity. If this principle was allowed to pass unopposed—this pernicious principle of setting up pure water, democratic Adam's ale, the true corporation gin, for purchase—where would we land? The committee that drafted the report could tell 'em!—in tyranny, despotism, bloodshed, and debauchery. Individuals would get drunk at the pump, as soon as the price was made an object: there was a consideration for them! The people had their rights—here the reader wagged his head vehemently, and grinned like a demon just going out of his senses—he could tell them, and the people could take care of 'em.

A general dissemination of genuine gin cock-tails among the hearers, could have scarcely produced greater excitement than did this most apposite and thrilling sentiment: caps flew up, and hats flew off, as if the air were alive with great black insects, and canes came down with a general crash, like a cane-brake itself in a state of tornado. It seemed as if they never would be done applauding this happy allusion; and the committee-man stood on the stool, swaying on one leg, and smiling, as if he considered it the most agreeable spectacle he had ever enjoyed. The committee did not suppose that it was the purpose of Providence to destroy mankind by a second flood, but they were satisfied, morally satisfied, if such an intention ever did come within the purview of the divine displeasure, the object would undoubtedly be accomplished by the bursting of the reservoir which it was proposed to erect at the junction of the Third Avenue and Bowery: at least, the committee thought it proper to add, as far as the citizens of New York were concerned. And so the report rambled on, like an echo among the Dutch hills, until it finally died away in a thundering resolution, and the little reader was inadvertently knocked off the stool by a charcoal-vender, who was employed, be-

sides grinning through the sable stains of his trade in a ghastly manner, in swinging his hat in approval of one of the concluding sentiments of his report.

The charcoal-man was hustled, the little committee-man set upon his legs, and a vote of thanks unanimously passed for the able report just read.

A very long, dull-looking man, next offered a resolution, and delivered a speech as long and dull as himself; which resolution and speech were seconded by a round, heavy man, in an harangue quite as rigmarole and ponderose;—when a pause occurred, during which the mob seemed to be reflecting what they should do next. After a proper degree of cogitation, they commenced shouting for a favorite speaker, who always interested their feelings by proposing a general division of property: which was very liberal in him, as he had nothing to divide but the payment of two-score old debts, and the expenses of a small family; but he failed to make his appearance. Upon which certain sagacious persons began peering about in the crowd, as if they expected to find him sandwiched away snugly among the carmen, omnibus-drivers, and stevedores, there present. Certain other active persons were despatched into the halls and purlieus of the building; a self-formed committee of five rushed post-haste for the bar-room; and one over-zealous individual was so far carried away by his enthusiasm, as to run a mile to the orator's dwelling, and there to demand his person with such breathless incoherence, as to lead his small family to suspect that their dear protector and paymaster harbored the intention of making way with himself.

A second popular favorite was called by the audience; the same scrutiny instituted, and with the same result. Affairs now looked exceedingly blank, the audience began to despair, and to entertain the horrible expectation of having to go to bed speechless, when an unknown individual pushed convulsively through the crowd, struggled up the steps, and placed himself at the foot of the platform, and stretching out his right arm to its full extent, began.

He was young—the bloom of roseate health upon his cheek would satisfy them of that. He was timid and doubtful: witness his tremblings and shiverings on presenting himself for the first time before that highly respectable body of august citizens. He was rash and foolhardy, he was aware, in coming before so intelligent an audience, at that critical moment. But he was actuated and impelled by a sense of duty, which would not allow him to be silent while that great question called for an advocate. They had heard the thunder of the cannon, in the report; the braying (a slight titter at this word) of trumpets, in the speeches of the two learned gentlemen that had preceded him; and now that the grand overture of battle had been performed, he ventured to come upon the field, and with his simple shepherd's pipe

to sound the humbler music of peace. He trusted that no violent, no vindictive feeling, would be indulged toward their opponents. Let their measure pass—let the aqueduct be reared, and let its waters begin to flow:—from these very waters, pernicious as they seemed, should be drawn the rainbow of promise for his friends; for the friends of cheap government and good order! Taxation was not democracy; debt was not democracy; public ruin and bankruptcy were not democracy (gently warbled the shepherd's pipe): and if this insane, wolfish, and reckless party wished to destroy itself with its own fangs—why, in God's name, bid them God-speed, and give them a clear field. He would not suggest that the farmers in Westchester county should oppose the passage of the aqueduct through their own lands; they were freemen and knew what was what. He would not stir up the Harlaem Bridge Company (Heaven forbid!) to withstand this encroachment upon their rights; they were a corporation, and could discriminate carrot from horse-radish. He hoped, he fervently and sincerely hoped and trusted, that the entire race of water-rats and ground-moles might be annihilated, before the undertaking was commenced; so that it might not be impeded or undermined by their operations. At these various hopes and suggestions, as they were delivered, there was an uproarious ha! ha! uttered by the assemblage, who seemed to relish them hugely; and, with a hint or two to the audience, not to allow themselves to be tampered with—not to look on and see their heads taken from their shoulders, and the bread from their children's mouths (all of which was heartily seconded by the hearers), the young orator—the gentle friend of peace—stepped from the platform.

At the conclusion of the speech, some one in the crowd jumped up a foot or two, and shouted, "Three cheers for the last speech!" and three cheers were given with great animation; and then, at the same suggestion, three more; and three at the end of them. Different members of the audience turned to each other and shook hands, and exclaimed, "Royal," "That was fine," and other like phrases of approbation; and then inquiries were set on foot as to the name of the new speaker, to which no one could furnish a satisfactory answer; and whether he was from this ward or that ward, which was in a state of equal doubt and uncertainty; and finally it was conjectured and suggested, that he didn't belong to any ward at all, but had come from the country, which they were for proving by his rural simile of the rainbow (rainbows not being indigenous in incorporated towns), and his intimate acquaintance with the feelings of the Westchester county farmers and ground-moles.

Whatever might be his name and origin, his foot had no sooner touched the floor, than he felt his sleeve twitched, and turning, he discovered a singular-looking little gentleman, beckoning him to follow.

## CHAPTER II.

## FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH HOBBLESHANK.

DISENGAGING himself from the crowd at Fogfire Hall, the young politician followed his unknown conductor into the open air. From the rapidity with which he moved in advance, although his gait was shuffling and uncertain, he was not fairly overtaken until he had reached the mouth of a neighboring refectory, at which, pausing only for an instant glance at the young man's countenance—which seemed to create a pleasurable feeling, and caused him to smile strenuously—he plunged down the steps. The young politician followed, and found himself in a close, narrow room, the air of which was musty with confinement, and having no opportunity from the pent place where it was imprisoned, to ramble about among meadows and fresh streams to enliven itself, depended on fumes of brandy and clouds of cigar-smoke, for whatever life it exhibited. A tall man stood before the fire, who would have inevitably perished of its noxious qualities if he had not taken occasion, through the day, to stand up the steps with his head and shoulders above ground, contemplating the clay-covered wagons that came in fresh from the country.

Judging from the starved, narrow-breasted skeletons of turkeys and fowls, the cold, sepulchral hams, the cadaverous, shrunken legs of mutton, and the dwarfed tarts and bread-rolls, that lay in miserable heaps on the table, they might have easily concluded that the piehouse into which they had descended was the dreary family-vault, to which melancholy butchers, bakers, and poulterers, were in the habit of consigning such of their professional progeny as had ceased to have life and merchantable qualities on earth. The room was, of all possible dirty rooms, the dirtiest. With walls smoked and tallow-stained; an unsanded floor; tables spotted all over, like the double-six of dominoes, and a fire with just enough animation to blush at the other appointments of the place. The piehouse had its pretensions, too; for it possessed not only a common room for outside customers, but a private parlor, snug and select, cut off from its vulgar neighbor by elegant blue curtains, made to resemble patches of dirty blue sky—moving on a wire with jingling brass rings, and entered by a half-raised step. Upon this, which was little more than a large stall, after all, they entered. The mysterious little gentleman, drawing the curtains behind them, rushed up to the fire and rubbed his hands together over the blaze, opened the curtains, thrust out his head, called for oysters and beer, and took his station at one side of the table in the middle of the floor. "It's all right," said the stranger. "Don't be alarmed; my name is Hobbleshank—what's yours?"

"Puffer Hopkins," replied the young politi-

cian, surveying more closely his whimsical companion.

He was an irregularly-built little gentleman, about fifty-five years of age, with a pale face, twitched out of shape somewhat by a paralytic affection; with one sound eye, and one in a condition of semi-transparency, which gave to his features something of a ghostly or goblin character; and hedging in, and heightening the effect of the whole, a pair of bushy black whiskers, of a fine, vigorous growth. The little gentleman wore a faded blue frock, short pantaloons, low shoes, an eyeglass, and a hat considerably dilapidated and impaired by age.

The singularity and whim of the little old gentleman's demeanor was shown in his shambling up sideways toward Puffer whenever he addressed him, and looking up timidly, first with the doubtful eye, as if sounding his way, and then with the sound one, fortifying himself, from time to time, from an immense snuff-box, which he carried awkwardly in his left hand.

"That was an excellent speech, young man!" said the strange little gentleman, dropping into a seat, and simultaneously swallowing an oyster, black with pepper.

"I trust the sentiments were correct," modestly suggested his companion.

"Never better, sir; sound as a Newtown-pippin, to the core," continued the strange little gentleman. "But you are young yet, sir—quite young—and have a thing or two to learn. Be good enough not to advance upon the stage again, if you please, without your coat buttoned snug to the chin, which shows that you mean to give them a resolute speech—a devilish resolute speech," exclaimed the little gentleman, glaring on the youth with his spectre eye, "full of storm and thunder, sir; or else with your breasts thrown wide back, indicating that you are about to regale them with an airy, well-ventilated, and very candid effusion."

Appreciating the interest that the little old gentleman expressed in his future success, his companion promised to comply, as far as in him lay, with these new requisitions in the art of addressing public bodies.

"There was an awful omission," continued the strange gentleman, "a very awful and unpardonable omission, in your harangue to-night." The little old gentleman's voice sounded sepulchral, and his companion cast his eyes anxiously about the select parlor.

"For Heaven's sake, what was that, sir?" asked the young gentleman, regarding his censor with intense interest.

"Why, sir," said the little old gentleman, relaxing into a grim smile, "where were your banners? You hadn't one in your whole speech! An address to a political assembly in New York, and not a tatter of bunting in the whole of it—you must excuse me, but it's the weakest thing I've ever known. An army might as well go into battle as an orator into our popular meetings, without his flags and standards. Where

were your stars, too? There wasn't even the twinkle of a comet's tail in the whole harangue: they expect it. Stars are the pepper and salt of a political discourse—mind that, if you please."

At this passage the little old gentleman became thoughtful, and fell upon his oysters and beer with horrible avidity; which process caused him to grow more thoughtful than ever. "Many a good speech have I heard," he at length said, contemplating Puffer Hopkins with melancholy regard, "whose deliverer now lies under the tombstone. Others lie there, too!—I'd give my life, sir," he exclaimed earnestly, pressing his hands closely together, "my life with its resulting interest, if I dared, for a minute's gaze at features that are lying in the silence and darkness of dust. That's hard, sir—too hard to bear—a young wife borne away in her bloom, by a cold, cruel hearse—black, all over black! And then what followed—do you recollect what followed? I'm a fool—you know nothing of it; why should you? Life is a green field to you, without as much as a grave or a furrow in it all."

"I am not too sure of that," answered Puffer Hopkins, "for I have a dim remembrance of a death that touched me nearly, long ago; whose death I can not say, but a vision, away off in past times, of a darkened house—a solemn train issuing forth, with one figure staggering into the funeral coach, drunk with excess of grief—the heavy roll of wheels, and many tears and lamentations in the small household."

While he delivered this, Hobbleshank looked earnestly in his face, as if he discovered in what he said, a meaning deeper than the words. At this there was a long silence, which Puffer Hopkins at length attempted to break, by stating to his companion the character in which he had appeared that night, for the first time, at Fogfire hall.

"I know," said Hobbleshank, pushing his open palm toward Puffer Hopkins, "don't say a word; I know all about it. You're a young professional trader in politics and patriotism; a beginner—just opened to-night with your first speech, and a fresh assortment of apostrophes and gesticulations. I know you are new in the business, for when you spoke of Heaven and eternal justice, you looked at the audience. Very green, my boy; an old spouter, in such a case, always rolls his eyeballs back under their lids, and smells of the chandelier, which is much better, although the odor isn't pleasant."

"A mere 'prentice at the business, I confess myself," answered Puffer.

"I wish you would bear in mind, too," continued his whimsical adviser, "when you address a mixed audience, and have occasion to speak of the majesty of the people, that the established rule is, not to stare at any individual dirty face in the middle of the crowd, but to look away off, beyond the crowd entirely; as if you discovered what you're speaking about in

some remote suburb with which they have nothing to do. Do you understand me?"

"I think I do," replied Puffer; "but isn't there generally some placid gentleman or other, who comes to the meeting early, and plants himself in front of the platform at a proper distance, with the praiseworthy purpose of having the speaker lay out all his strength in gazing at him, and moving his bowels and understanding? I used to think so—and have tried it more than once; it feels very pleasant, I can assure you."

"What of that? It's your business to humble these gentry—they're aristocracy in disguise, and borrow their cartmen's hats to come to public meetings in. No, no!" cried Hobbleshank, with emphasis, "don't you be caught in that trap. Do you pick out the dirtiest waistcoat in the audience, with the most cadaverous face in the room peering over it—pitch your eye upon the second button from the top, just where the proof of a lack of under-garments becomes overwhelming—and fire away. Your target's a poor scamp—the beggarliest in the house, with an understanding like a granite rock (needing the whole force of an incorporated company of metaphysicians to quarry and dress it), and a select circle of acquaintance, among wharfingers, small-boatmen, and bean-eaters, near the market. That's your man. Dash your hair back from your brow, swing your arms, and don't spare flowers, knuckles, tropes, and desk-lids."

By the time Hobbleshank had arrived at this division of his subject, he had reached, working himself along by degrees, the extremity of the stall, and was standing on his toes, with his goggle eyes glaring over the partition at a melancholy personage—the very counterpart of his description—who sat on a stool by the fire, with his piece of hat drawn over his eyes, with one leg on the ground and the other thrust under him on the seat.

"That's one of them," whispered Hobbleshank, casting an eye down at Puffer, and pointing with his finger over the partition. "No it isn't, after all, for there's the top of a book sticking out of his pocket. Our kidney don't know books."

Puffer Hopkins leaned out of the stall, and stretching himself forward, contemplated the object to which Hobbleshank directed him; but instantly drew back, and seizing his companion by the skirts, pulled him, almost by main force, into a seat.

"Don't, for Heaven's sake!" he said, as he bent forward and placed his mouth at the ear of Hobbleshank, "that's my poor neighbor, Fob, the tailor."

These brief words were delivered in such a way as if Puffer Hopkins expected their mere utterance would silence his companion, and cause an entire revolution in the feelings with which he had regarded the sorry creature before the piehouse fire.

"A poor tailor," he echoed, "well, is that all?"

"Yes; that's all!" answered Hopkins.

"Nothing more?" asked Hobbleshank.

"Nothing more," replied Puffer Hopkins.

These questions were asked and answered, in tones that brought the conversation between them to a dead pause, at which it stayed for a good many minutes, when Puffer Hopkins, rousing a little, asked if that "wasn't enough?"

At this moment the poor gentleman at the fire waked, heaved a great sigh, and taking an imperfect copy of a book from his pocket, and lifting his hat from his eyes, fell to perusing it with great earnestness; all of which interfered very seriously with any further conversation on his condition and prospects in life—so that, after contemplating him steadily for several minutes, they thought proper to retreat to the previous subject of their discourse.

"You shouldn't have dropped from the platform so suddenly," said Hobbleshank.

"I was through my speech," answered Puffer Hopkins, "and wished to get out of sight at once."

"Out of sight!" exclaimed his companion, as if unconscious of Puffer's presence, "what a fool the boy is. Why, sir, if you intend to be a politician—a thriving one I mean—you must keep yourself in view, like St. Paul's steeple, that frowns down on you wherever you go through the city. Out of sight, indeed! You should have made a bow to the audience—wheeled about—seized the first adjacent hand on the stage—shook it with the utmost violence, smiling in the owner's face all the while, very pleasantly—and then planted yourself on a chair fronting the audience—hooked your elbows over the corner of the chair-top—smiling steadily on the populace, and leaving off, only every now and then, to nurse your ruffle and pull down your wristbands."

"I'll endeavor to practise this next time," said Puffer, meekly.

"Do," said Hobbleshank, "and look to your costume, if you please. What do you mean by wearing this brown coat, and having your hair cut plain?"

"I don't know why I had my hair cut this way," answered Puffer, "but I wore the coat because it was large in the sleeves, and allowed a wide spread of the arms when I came to the rainbow—thus," and he expanded his arms after the manner of an arch, as he had, indeed, endeavored to do in the delivery of his speech, but was prevented, at the time, from the embarrassment of having to employ his handkerchief in clearing the sweat which oozed out in liquid drops on his forehead. "You recollect the simile?"

"Perfectly," answered Hobbleshank. "And don't station yourself next time, sir, on the lowest point of the platform—but stand forth in the centre, making wings of the six vices on either side of you, and compelling the anxious presiding officer, directly behind you, to stretch his neck around the skirt of your coat, and to

look up in your face with painful eagerness to catch what you're saying, which always makes the audience, who have great confidence in the head of the meeting, very attentive. It's a grand stroke to make a tableau on any stage—worthy the biggest type on the showbills, and here you have one of the very finest imaginable."

"But as to the orator's position," asked Puffer; "do you think a public speaker is ever justifiable in standing on his toes?"

"In extreme cases, he may be," answered Hobbleshank, pondering; "but it's best to rise gradually with your hearers, and, if you can have a private understanding with one of the waiters, to fix a chair conveniently—a wooden-bottomed Windsor, mind, and none of your rushers; for its decidedly funny and destroys the effect, to hear a gentleman declaiming about a sinking-fund, or a penal code, or the abolition of imprisonment for debt, up to his belly in a broken chair-frame. As the passion grows upon you, plant your right leg on one of the rounds, then on the bottom, and finally, when you feel yourself at red-heat, spring into the chair, waive your hat, and call upon the audience to die for their country, their families, and their firesides—or any other convenient reason." As Hobbleshank advanced in his discourse, he had illustrated its various topics by actual accompaniments, mounting first on his legs, then the bench, and ended by leaping upon the table, where he stood brandishing his broken hat, and shouting vociferously for more oysters.

No reply to this uproarious summons appearing, Hobbleshank thrust his head between the curtains, discovered that the tailor had vanished, and that the tall man was sitting against the chimney-piece, with his legs stretched upon a stool, and sound asleep. He snatched up his hat, and hurrying toward the street, said he thought it was time to go.

As it had worn far into the heart of the night, Puffer Hopkins could not gainsay the postulate, and followed on. Hobbleshank keeping a little in advance, they rambled thus through many streets; the little old gentleman sometimes hurrying them forward at a gallop, and again subsiding into a slow, careful step, as if he kept pace with the heavy chimes that were sounding midnight from the town-clocks, or perchance, with thoughts that beat at his heart with a sharper stroke.

"Be constant, child," said he, as he was preparing to leave his companion, "in your visits to popular associations and gatherings: many a man is platformed and scaffolded by these committees and junteos, into the high places of the nation." He then told Hopkins where he could leave word for him, in case he should at any time require advice or assistance; said that, if he chose, he might be at Barrell's oyster-house the next evening, and he would wait upon him to one of these assemblages; and before Puffer Hopkins could answer one

way or the other, he had disappeared from his side, and vanishing into a by-street, was soon lost in the darkness.

It can not be matter of wonder that Puffer made his way home with a head considerably bewildered and unsettled by the occurrences of the night. The great popular gathering; his own first speech; the thundering and tumultuous applause; and, what fastened itself with peculiar force upon his imagination, the voice and figure of the little old man, uttering pensive truths or shrewd observations, with the kindly interest he had expressed in himself from the first moment—all crowded upon him, and made him feel that he was in an actual world, where, if he would but bestir himself, fortune might prove his friend. The result of the whole was, that he determined to prosecute his career; and in furtherance of that determination, he resolved to meet Hobbleshank again; the last image that his mind distinctly recognised, ere it yielded to sleep, being that of the little paralytic, passing and repassing, at times dissolved in tears, and again, filling his chamber with the echoes of smothered laughter!

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE BOTTOM CLUB.

PUNCTUAL to his appointment with Hobbleshank, Puffer Hopkins, at a few minutes of seven o'clock the next evening, directed his steps toward Barrell's oyster-house, where in due time he arrived, and made discovery of one of the most singular little oyster-houses that could be found throughout the whole of oyster-eating Christendom. Mr. Jarve Barrell, it would seem, had, in the golden age of his career, been the proprietor of a large public house, occupying an entire building, and surrounded by his regiments of waiters and wine-bottles, whose services were clamorously and steadily demanded, by a mob of customers, from six in the evening until one, morning; in fact, the poor man's head had been half turned, by the pressure of a prosperous and growing business. But, somehow or other, oysters, one unlucky season, grew smaller, waiters more impudent for their pay, and custom walked out of that street into the next, on a visit to a new landlord, who served his stews with silver spoons and his oysters in scollop-shells, so that poor Jarve Barrell was compelled, in spite of himself, to clip his wings and confine himself to an humbler cage; in a word, he rented his second floor to a boarding-house keeper, took in a barber at the rear of the first floor, and continued business on his own account in the front room of the same. A second decrease in the size of shell-fish, the opening of a street that carried travel in another direction, and Barrell was forced into that last stronghold of the oyster-man, the cellar; and there it was

that Puffer Hopkins now found him, standing on one leg of his own and one that came out of a fine piece of oak woods at West Farms, a coarse white apron about his waist and a salamander in his countenance, declaring stoutly to a customer, that although he had roughed it against the tide all his life, he was determined to have his own way in dying.

Being questioned as to the way to which he alluded, he proceeded to explain, that whenever he felt the approaches of death, he should hire a White-haller to pull him over to Staten Island, cast anchor just above the richest bed in the shore, and giving one good deep plunge, said Jarve Barrell, "I'll carry myself to the bottom, and stretching myself out on a picked oyster-bed, make up my mind to die; so with the tide rippling over my head, and a dozen or more pretty mermaids standing about me, I'll give up the ghost, and hold myself entitled to haunt the bay and island ever after, with a spruce ruffle of sea-weeds in my bosom."

Puffer Hopkins was well pleased with the joyous spirit of the decayed oyster-man, but had scarcely heard him through when he detected a quick clatter upon the steps, and turning, he discovered his singular companion of the previous night hurrying down. In a moment he had Puffer by the hand, and hailed his appearance with a sort of wondering enthusiasm, as if it gave him great joy to find him there and to take him again in a friendly grasp. Hobbleshank interchanged a few words with Mr. Jarve Barrell as to the influence of certain recent enactments relating to oyster-beds upon his own trade and custom, to which Mr. Jarve Barrell gave very lucid and convincing replies. and they set out forthwith for the Bottom Club. This they were not long in finding, for Hobbleshank guiding Puffer rapidly through sundry dark alleys and by-ways, for which he seemed to have a peculiar inclination, they reached a building in front of which a dusky lamp was glimmering, ascended two flights of stairs, and knocked at a low dingy door.

The door was opened from within, and Puffer advancing, with Hobbleshank in front, found himself in a long narrow room, with a plain pine table stretched through the centre, a forlorn-looking eagle, with a bunch of arrowy skewers in its talons and a striped flag about its head for a turban, two or three carpenters' benches along the walls, and the whole lighted by four sombre tallow twopennies at the farthest extremity.

Upon the table was planted a large earthen pitcher, with an emblematic toper with his leg cocked up, in a state of happy exaltation, displayed on the side thereof in white ware—and around the board were established a dozen individuals or more, constituting the chief force of the immortal Bottom Club.

The gentlemen of the Bottom Club, as they presented themselves at that moment to Puffer Hopkins, certainly furnished a remarkable spectacle; the most remarkable feature of



which was, that all the large members of the club, by some inscrutable fatality, were constrained and restricted in small hats and irksome jackets, while all the small members, by some equally potent dispensation, were allowed to revel in an unlimited wilderness of box-coat, petersham, and tarpaulin. The delicate gentlemen wore great rough neck-stocks and commanded huge iron snuff-boxes on the table, and the robust and muscular members assumed dainty black ribands and elegant turn-down collars, with more or less ruffle crisping up under their broad heavy-bearded chins.

A thin, thoughtful gentleman, at one corner of the table, was enveloped in an overgrown vest, hideous with great red vines creeping all over it, and large enough to serve the purposes of a body-coat; and confronting him, at an opposite corner, sat a stout omnibus-driver, making himself as comfortable as he could in a waistcoat, so many sizes too small, that it gaped apart like a pair of rebellious book covers, and drew his arms into a posture that resembled not a little that of the wings of a great Muscovy gander prepared for the spit.

"We welcome you," said the pale thoughtful man, rising and extending his right hand toward Puffer as he advanced, while with his left he secured the sails of his great red vest, "we welcome you, Mr. Hopkins, to this association of brethren. In us you see exemplified the progress of social reform; we are wearing each other's coats and breeches in a simultaneous confusion, and, laboring under a passionate excitement, we may yet ameliorate our condition so far as to undertake to pay each other's debts. We are subjecting ourselves to a great experiment for the benefit of mankind, the interests of the total race. You see what hardships we are undergoing"—he did, for at the mere mention of the thing, the whole club wriggled in their ill-assorted garments like so many clowns in the very crisis of a contortion—"to test the principles of an ameliorated condition of things. Yet, sir, we are happy, very happy to see you here to-night. This spot on which you stand, is consecrated to freedom of opinion—to the festival of the soul. This is no musical forest, no Hindoo hunter's hut, got up for effect at the amphitheatre; we haven't trees here alive with real birds! the branches laden with living monkeys! the fountains visited by longlegged flamingoes! the greensward covered with gazelles, grazing and sporting! Oh, no; we are a mere caucus of plain citizens, in our everyday dresses, sitting in this small room, on rough benches, to re-organize society, and give the world a new axle; that's all."

Hereupon the thoughtful gentleman sat down, the club looked at each other and shook their heads, as much as to say, "This chairman of ours is certainly a born genius;" and Puffer and Hobbleshank were earnestly invited to the upper end of the board, where they could possess the immediate society of the intellectual president, with the convenient solace of the

beer-pitcher. As soon as they were seated, and furnished with a draught from the earthen jug, to make them feel at home (a man always feeling most at home when his wits are abroad), the legitimate business of the club proceeded with great spirit.

The first subject that was brought before them was, a general consultation as to the part the club—the friends of social reform and a re-organization of society—should play in the approaching election of a Mayor for the city and county of New York; something striking and decisive being always expected from the redoubted Bottom Club. One member hinted and proposed that there should be a general destruction of the enemy's handbills; which was amended so as to embrace a thrashing of the enemy's bill-stickers, wherever found; which was still further enlarged, so as to cover the special case of freighting a hostile bill-sticker's cart with building-stone and breaking a bill-sticker's donkey's back. The cutting of the flag-ropes, and sawing down of liberty-poles next came up, and passed promptly—a stout man in a small roundabout asseverating vehemently that the price of firewood should be brought down, if he stayed up till midnight three nights in the week, to accomplish the benevolent object. The club then proceeded to preamble and resolve that they considered the liberty of the citizens of this metropolis in imminent danger, and that they would protect the same at the hazard of their lives; by which the Bottom Club meant, that they would hold themselves prepared to breed a riot at five minutes' notice, if found necessary to prevent a surplus of voters on the opposite side from enjoying the invaluable franchise of depositing their ballots. Two sturdy members, belonging to the intellectual and highly-refined fraternity of omnibus-drivers, next pledged themselves in the most earnest manner, to conduct their respective vehicles, at such time as might be most apposite, through the centre of any well-dressed crowd that might be in the neighborhood of the poll, and also to indulge in such incidental flourishes of the whip on their way, as would inevitably persuade the gentry to stand back. As beer and brandy flowed through the club—which they did, with a marvellous depth and celerity of current—the tide of heady resolution deepened; and they at length, in their extreme heat and fervor, determined to throw off their coats to a man, and enjoy a regular break-down dance about the table.

With wonderful alacrity they carried this judicious resolution into effect, by disrobing themselves of coats, shad-bellies, and jackets, and casting them in a heap on a sailor's chest established under the eagle's wing. They then, hand in hand, Hobbleshank and Puffer Hopkins joining in, commenced capering in a circle, dashing down, first the right heel and then the left, with astonishing energy, and as if they were driving in the nails of the floor all over again; meantime roaring out the tag-ends of a



partisan song, which intimated that, "They were the boys so genteel and civil, that cared not a straw for Nick nor the devil;" with other choice sentiments metrically stated. While they were immersed in this elegant recreation, a single gentleman—a member of the club—who did not choose to partake thereof, sat apart indulging in his own profound cogitations. He was in many respects a peculiar personage, and seemed to enjoy a copy-right way of his own; which copy-right might have borne date as early as his birth and entrance into the world, for Nature had given him a pale, chalky countenance, a sort of blank between youth and age; a pair of knavish gray eyes, always turned upward, and a nose of the same class, which appeared most honestly to sympathize with them. He was of a small, shrunken figure, with a slight indication of a hump at the shoulders, long, thin fingers, and legs of a somewhat misshapen and imperfect character.

This singular little gentleman, as we said, sat apart, indulging in his own thoughts; the purport of which appeared presently to be, a determination to investigate and scrutinize the pockets of the various coats, jackets, and shad-bellies, which had been laid aside by the dancers, for to this task he now assiduously applied himself, and while his companions were enjoying themselves in their way, he enjoyed himself in his own way, by divesting them of such of their contents as suited his purposes, whatever they might be. In this general scrutiny it would have been an impeachment of his talents as an inquisitor to have charged him with neglecting the remotest corner or out-of-the-way borough of the apparel either of Hobbleshank or Puffer Hopkins.

Having accomplished this undertaking to his own satisfaction, he established himself at a side of the long table, planted a fur cap of great antiquity, after a drunken fashion, over his brows, dropped his head upon his folded arms, and devoted himself, with great apparent zeal and sincerity, to the business of sleeping.

Meantime the gentlemen of the Bottom Club had wearied of their sport, and oppressed by beer and hard work, they dropped into their seats.

The pitcher went round, once, twice, and thrice, and by this time they had attained an elevation of conduct and expression that was truly sublime to behold. The heavy-bearded man swore, and laughed, and dashed his fist upon the table, with the uproar of half-a-dozen bakers at kneading time. The two omnibus-drivers, for some unknown, and at this remote period from the event, un conjecturable cause, entered solemnly into a set-to, in which much muscle and science were displayed, and which ended in a most fraternal embrace under the table.

A cadaverous, thoughtful man—not the chairman—who was no talker but a wonderful deep thinker and metaphysician, grew mysterious and communicative, and hinted that he had

that in the pocket of his swallow-tail which would raise a devil of a ferment if the public but knew of it.

A fifth associate of the club, who still retained an insufficient hat planted jauntily on his head, thought it would be a capital idea—a very capital idea—a devilish first-rate idea in the way of a social re-organization—to get together a parcel of gilt steeple-balls, and hatch out a brood of young churches by clapping a bishop upon them.

Another gentleman was inclined to think that the Bottom Club had better mind its own business, by petitioning the common council to have jugglers appointed inspectors of election, who could pass into the ballot-box two tickets for one on their own side, and no tickets for ever so many on the other.

A wide-mouthed member, the author of the ditty that had been sung, and clerk and bell-ringer to a neighboring market, became horribly sentimental, shed tears in his beer, and kissed his hand to the eagle at the other end of the room. As the entertainments were manifestly drawing to an end, Hobbleshank glanced warily toward Puffer Hopkins, and made for the door. But they were not let off so easily—for simultaneous with the rising of Puffer Hopkins was that of the entire Bottom Club; and a general friendly assault was begun upon the person of that worthy young gentleman.

First, the gentlemen of the club insisted on shaking hands all round toward the right, and then all round toward the left; one or two were resolved to embrace him, and did so; and at last, after the pantomime, there was a unanimous call for a speech from that gentleman, which summons was, however, without a discovery of the substitution on the part of the astute members of the Bottom Club, responded to by Hobbleshank, after his own peculiar fashion, with a very happy allusion to the striped flag and the refreshments.

The unshorn man hoped Puffer Hopkins would come again, and vowed he was his friend to command, from the state of Maine to Cape May; and the metaphysical deep thinker, struggling manfully with the beer he had imbibed, promised next time to communicate something of vital consequence to the welfare of this Union; with which promises, protestations, and God-speeds, Hobbleshank and Hopkins departed.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MR. FYLER CLOSE AND HIS CUSTOMERS.

It can not be denied that Mr. Fyler Close had selected his lodgings with commendable thrift and discretion. A single small apartment over a bakery, and looking out upon a public pump, supplied him at the lowest current rate with the three primary necessities of life; namely,

warmth, from the bi-daily inflammation of the oven for the benefit of neighboring families—biscuits, the legitimate spawn of the oven—and water, the cheap creature of corporate benevolence. It could scarcely be expected, that sundry fat spiders that kept their webs in the different corners of his room, would be incorporated in any of the banquets of Mr. Fyler Close, although by many people they might have been regarded as a respectable addition thereto. With the exception of its inhabitants, the single small apartment was almost wholly void—there being no covering upon the floor, no curtains at the window, no paper upon the walls, and not the slightest semblance of a fire, past, present, or future, on the deserted hearthstone. To be sure, if you had opened a narrow door on one side, you might have detected in a cramped closet a pair of coverlids, in which Mr. Close was in the habit of sheathing his meager limbs every night, as a nominal protection against chilblains and rheumatism; while the door of the closet was carefully fastened and secured within, from a fear which the occupant somehow or other encouraged, that he should be roused some unlucky morning with a heavy hand on his throat, a big grim face bending over him, and his pockets all picked clean.

In the outer room stood a dilapidated candlestand, covered with a tattered baize, with a battered inkstand and two stumpy pens lying upon the same; three chairs with decayed bottoms; and, in the corner of the hearth, a single long gloomy poker, with its head up the chimney.

The advantages of these commodious quarters were, at the present juncture, enjoyed by Mr. Fyler Close himself, who being a short, hard-visaged gentleman, in a great blue coat some three sizes too large for him, and a pair of ambitious trowsers that climbed his legs, disdainful intercourse with a pair of low cheap-cut shoes, became the accommodations admirably. There was another, a long, spare personage, with a countenance so marked, and scarred, and written all over with ugly lines and seams, as to resemble a battered tombstone; and having old decayed teeth that disclosed themselves whenever he opened his mouth, the fancy of uncouth dry bones sticking out at the corner of a grave was still further kept up. There was something extremely sinister in the features of this individual, who sat in the nook between the closet and chimney-piece, and constantly glared about him, in a restless manner, as if the air swarmed wherever he looked with unusual sounds, and as if he caught sudden sight of faces by no means pleasant to look upon.

"I don't see that I could have managed my little moneys much better," said Mr. Fyler Close, "unless I had locked them up in an iron safe, and buried the key under the walls of the house. There's only about four hours—and they're at dead midnight—when my debtors

could slip away from me; and then they'd have to do it devilish cautiously, Leycraft, not to be heard. See, sir! I am in the very centre of all my investments, and have a watch on them like an auctioneer at the height of his sales. You see that yellow house? I make the owner keep his shutters open, because I have a mortgage on his piano, which I wouldn't lose sight of for the world."

"Quite an eye for music, I should think!" interposed his companion.

"And a pretty good ear too," continued Mr. Close, "for if I should fail to hear my little blacksmith's hammer in the old forge, off this way, I should go distracted. It soothes me very much to hear that anvil ringing from early light down to broad dusk; and you can't tell what a comfort it is to me when I'm sick!"

"Is he punctual in his interest?" asked Mr. Leycraft, well knowing that the fine arts must be associated in Mr. Fyler Close's mind with some such disagreeable contingency.

"Exemplary, sir; and when he falls sick and can't make a racket himself, he always sends round word and employs a couple of boys to keep it up, just to satisfy my mind. If the forge stopped for two days, I should be under the necessity of coming down on his shop with a sharp-clawed writ, which would be very painful."

"Exercruciating, I should think," said Mr. Leycraft, smiling grimly; "it would give you a sort of moral rheumatism, I've no doubt!"

"You know it would!" rejoined Fyler Close, returning the smile. "Then here's the baker—he can't run away without my smelling the fresh loaves as they go into the cart; and the haberdasher over the way in front, couldn't escape me, unless she undertook to dress up all her male acquaintance in ruffles and false bosoms, and let them out through the alley. That might do, but I guess she isn't up to it; since she lost her husband she's gone a little weak in the head, and pays an extra cent on the dollar when she is borrowing from Mr. Fyler Close."

"These are small gains and slow ones," said Mr. Leycraft; "you might sit on spiders' eggs like these for a century, and not hatch out a fortune. Let's have something bold and dashing—something where you put in no capital and double it to boot in less than a week!"

"Something modelled on the farm-house affair, eh?" said Fyler Close, leaning on his companion significantly.

"Will you let that subject alone, if you please, Mr. Fyler Close!" cried Mr. Leycraft, whose countenance lowered and darkened on his companion as he spoke. "We have had talks enough about that cursed house, and one too many. I wish the title-deed was in the right owner's hands!"

"You do—do you?" urged Mr. Close, pleasantly. "Shall I ask Mrs. Hetty Lettuce, the market-women, when she comes here next to pay the rent or renew her mortgage, if she

can't find him for us? Perhaps if we paid her well she might relieve us of the property, and provide a very gentlemanly owner in our place. Shall we advertise—offer rewards—post placards? I've no doubt if the purlieus of the city were well dragged, that an heir would turn up."

"Stuff! Fyler Close, you know well enough that an heir couldn't be brought alive off either one of the five continents, that could make good his claim; and that makes you chuckle so like a fiend. Mrs. Lettuce has lost trace of him for more than twenty years—has grown fat and lazy—borrows money on bond and mortgage, and don't care a straw about the subject:—"

"Where's your grand project all this time?" interposed Fyler Close. "Shall we have something new to practise our wits on, or shall we rake among our dead schemes for wherewithal to warm our brains with?"

"Now that you are on that," said Mr. Leycraft, rapidly surveying the nooks and privacies of the apartment, and bestowing a broad glare on the door and windows, "I say freely and without the least reserve, that my head's a nine-pin, if I don't lay a plan before you will make you thrill down to your pocket-ends with rapture: it's a neat scheme—very neat,—but at the same time mighty magnificent."

Saying this, Leycraft drew close up to the side of the broker, laid their heads close together, and bending over the stand, he moved his finger slowly in a sort of hieroglyphic over it, and, tapping his forehead complacently, was about to detail his notable plan, when a knock was heard at the door, which cut short any further communication for the present.

The knock was repeated a little louder; Fyler Close motioned to his companion, who vanished expeditiously down a pair of back stairs into the yard, looking anxiously back all the time as if under pursuit, and so through the baker's; and Close, snatching from his pocket a well-worn hymn-book, began reciting a most excellent passage of psalmody, in a deep and nasal intonation.

The knock was repeated three or four times before an invitation was given to enter; and although the broker glanced over the top of his book, as the door opened and discovered his visiter, he assumed not to be conscious of the presence of any person whatever, but proceeded steadily, in fact, with rather increased energy, in his capital divertisement. "Please, sir," said the visiter, a stout-built lady, curtsying and advancing timidly a step or two, "please sir, what's to be done about the little mortgage on my grounds, sir?"

This question Fyler Close seemed at first altogether unable to apprehend; but when it was repeated, accompanied by a slight jingle of silver in the visiter's pocket, he started, deposited his book open upon the stand—as if he wished to resume it at the very earliest convenience—looked about him and pensively remarked,

twitching his whiskers, of which there was a dry tuft on either cheek, violently:

"Poor old man!—there's no comfort left for you now, but psalm-singing and class-meetings every other evening in the week. These are old chairs, madam!"

"They certainly are, Mr. Close; very old; there's no denying facts," answered the huckster.

"This is a dreadful dreary room for an old man to live in!" again groaned the broker.

"Sartain!" responded the unwary market-woman; "I think in that point, to do you justice, it's but next better than a family vault, saving the death's-heads and the smell."

"And now you ask me, a poor lonesome man, living like Death himself, as you admit, and that can afford to keep no better company than three poor crazy chairs, to renew your mortgage at seven per cent.—why, a cannibal, with good cannibal feelings, wouldn't ask it!"

Mr. Close, on delivery of this speech, fell silent, and dropped into a profound meditation, during which he from time to time looked up, and eyed the stout person of the huckster as if he thought it would furnish a most delicate morsel for a Carribee. But his own method of devouring a victim differed essentially from that adopted by the benighted heathen, and he now proceeded to demonstrate his dexterity in his own particular line of manipulation.

"Well! you shall have it!" he cried, awaking as from an anxious reverie; "I have considered it—your business shall be done, Mrs. Lettuce."

"Thank you, sir—thank you, sir! I am very much obliged," exclaimed the market-woman, bowing and curtsying with great show of gratitude, but misapprehending slightly the meaning of Mr. Fyler Close, and promising the accruing interest in hard dollars, punctually on quarter-day.

"But I must have my summer supply of radishes!" said Close.

"Oh, for the trifle of that, Master Close, we'll not differ. I can send you down a bunch or two by the girls, every now and then."

"Every now and then will not do, madam; I must have them regularly, for I can't live without putting a few for sale, in the season of them, at the baker's window below stairs."

"Well, I don't mind a handful of greens, in the way of binding a bargain; so the cart shall stop every morning if you please, and leave you a dozen bunches."

"Very good, very good!" exclaimed the broker, rubbing his hands together, "you are a woman of sense; and now, I must have my asparagus, that's a dainty herb—I love asparagus, dearly—and it sells well when it's early. Mind, I must have early tops, or none at all! Pick me the tops that grow near the house, close up by the foundations, will you?"

Early tops, and such as he desired, were accordingly promised, perforce; Mrs. Hetty Lettuce diving convulsively into her pockets, t-

make sure of such small change as she had about her, as everything appeared to be slipping away from her ownership with extraordinary velocity and despatch.

"I'll not ask you," continued the discriminating Mr. Close, "to supply me with butter, nor with eggs, although something nice might be done with them through my neighbor below—but eggs are quite apt to addle on hand, and butter must be kept in ice, which costs twopence a pound, and melts without leaving as much as a thank-ye in your pocket."

"Your sentiments are very excellent, sir, on that subject," said Mrs. Lettuce, brightening up.

"Yes, they are, very excellent; but you'll think them far nicer on the subject of good worsted stockings, made with your own dainty hands—three pair for winter use, I should have three pair at least, and as many more for fall. You know we must guard against frosts and chilblains a little; made with low tops, with red clocks to show they are your fabric—one of the sweetest knitters in the market."

With this he fell back quietly in his chair, and reminding Mrs. Lettuce that he should expect his first pair of fall socks Wednesday-week, he wished her good day; which wish Mrs. Lettuce was by no means idle in accepting, for her departure was, in fact, accomplished with such expedition, as to amount almost to a precipitate flight. At this we can not be greatly astonished, when we consider the chance of a requisition being made upon her to furnish the entire outfit and wardrobe of the broker, by way of lightening his doleful condition and eking out the percentage on his mortgage.

As soon as Mrs. Lettuce had departed, the broker ascended a chair, and after careful inspection of an old chest in his closet, and making discovery of a single pair of fragmentary hose and an old stocking, he said, laughing to himself, "This merchandise of the old market-woman's must go into the hands of Ishmael, that's clear. Nights are growing sharper; a little, a very little wood must be laid in; and where fires are kept, socks should be discounted." He had just stepped down from this inquisition, when a sharp rap echoed through the hall, and, without waiting for a summons to enter, the strange old body, Puffer Hopkins' friend, marched abruptly into the apartment, with a very peremptory and threatening aspect.

"I have come again!" said the old gentleman, sternly.

"I see you have," replied Mr. Fyler Close, smiling on him with all the suavity and mellowness of an August day.

"Do you see that I am here?" continued Hobbleshank.

"Most assuredly—unless you are an apparition; and then you are here and not here, at the same time," answered the broker.

"If I were a goblin, sir—come in here with a thong of leather to strip you to your skin and

stripe you all over with blows—would I be out of place, do you think?"

"Perhaps not much; a little, we'll say a little," answered Mr. Close, still smiling gently on his visitor, "just to balance the sentence."

"And then if I carried your bruised old carcass," continued Hobbleshank, "and plunged it in a gulf of boiling fire, and held it there by the throat for a century, or so—would it be pleasant and satisfactory?"

"Extremely so," answered the broker; "nothing could be desired more charming, unless it might be a bond on compound interest, with the interest payable at twelve o'clock daily."

"That would be finer, you think?"

"Much finer—because that would leave one the use of his legs to get out of troubles with."

"Now, sir," said Hobbleshank, who always made it a point to subject the broker to a searching and playful cross-examination—the answers to which, as has been seen, on the part of the broker, were always extremely candid and confiding, "now, sir, I want to know of you, whether you think a gentleman who has stood by and seen a man's wife die by inches in the veriest need of common food—has seen the man go mad—yes, mad, sir, with grief, and flee from his house in utter despair and misery—do you think this gentleman, who, when he has put the child and heir of these poor wretches out of the way—God knows how—takes the roof that should have sheltered his boy's head—do you think he deserves the use of his legs? or his cursed, gripping hands? or his great devilish eyes?"

"Not at all—by no means, my dear sir," answered Fyler Close, blandly. "It would be waste and extravagance to allow such a monster anything but his neck; you know he might hang by that."

"Suppose you hadn't conveniences to hang him with—no tackle, no scaffold, no murderer's cap," continued Hobbleshank, "and couldn't persuade the gentleman to lend his neck to a noose—what then?"

"What then?—I confess I should be at a stand. The case stands thus, if I apprehend you, my dear sir," answered Mr. Close, with the same astonishing equanimity, "here's a great villain to be punished; the law can't reach him; he won't consent to be strung up without law, and declines—is it so?—positively declines to come into any friendly arrangement to be burnt or bastinadoed, what's to be done? Upon my honor, my good sir, I must allow the knave has the better of you. I am sorry for it, extremely sorry; but the ways of Providence are just, very just, and I guess you'll have to wait for them!"

As Mr. Close uttered these words he assumed a benign and tranquil expression of countenance, and looked serenely forward into empty space, as if it was a hardship—a very great hardship, that such a case should exist, but that it was his duty, as an exemplary citizen, to resign himself to it without a murmur. In this

seeming quietude of feeling Hobbleshank scarcely shared.

"What's to be done?" he shouted, darting forward toward the broker—"his ugly flesh is to be torn with sharp nails, like pincers; his head is to be broken, where these maggots hatch—wretch!"

But ere he could fasten upon the broker, and exemplify his notions of punishment, that gentleman, who had been warily watching his visitor all through the interview, dropped from his chair, glided athwart the candle-stand, and throwing himself into the adjoining closet, secured it from within.

Having rehearsed this performance many times before, in previous interviews with his visitor, Mr. Fyler Close achieved it at present with marvellous despatch. For a few minutes Hobbleshank made furious assaults upon the broker's fortress, with his feet and clenched fists which he dashed violently against the panels; all of which proceedings were echoed from within by a hard, iron laugh, that almost set Hobbleshank beside himself. From time to time the laughter continued, and the rage of the old man increased, until at length, in his extremity of passion, he snatched up the single piece of furniture—the prime ornament of the apartment—dashed it in fragments upon the hearth, kicked open the outer door, and rushed almost headlong into the street.

Mr. Fyler Close had no sooner heard his retreating steps, than he quietly unearthed himself, and stepping along the hall of the building, hoisted a window in front, and putting forth his head, watched with considerable interest the form of Hobbleshank as it was whirled along by the rage and desperation of its owner, without much regard to children, fishmongers—with which the street swarmed—wheelbarrows, or ladies in full dress. He then tranquilly gathered the remains of his writing-table, tied them in a bundle with a string, and placing them tenderly in the corner, produced from an upper shelf of his closet-stronghold a single sea-biscuit, and proceeded to his evening meal.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE AUCTION ROOM.

ANXIOUS to become familiar with the people in their assemblies and public gatherings—to learn how crowds are excited and assuaged, and made to do the bidding of cunning men; now that which would be folly and sheer madness with one, may, practised upon many in a confused mass, take the hue of profoundest wisdom and justice; and having at heart, withal, the suggestions of his strange old friend of Fog-fire hall, Puffer Hopkins now made it a point to haunt meetings and congregations of every sort, anniversaries, wharf crowds and lectures, and to detect how the leviathan populace is

snared in a fair net of silvery words and pleasant speeches.

At the lower extremity of the great thoroughfare of Chatham street, just below the theatre, lies an oblong, deep shop, into which is drawn, between the hours of seven and nine, evening, a portion of the metropolitan life, where it is kept raging and fuming—pent up in a close mass—and struggling with the black-haired demon of the place. The genius of the oblong warehouse is none other than a gloomy-looking auctioneer, who hangs over a counter fixed on a raised platform, calling on the individuals before him—who are chiefly clerks, newsboys, journeymen, and innocent gentlemen from the country—to sustain him in his disinterested desire to advocate the elegance of binders, the instructive and entertaining qualities of authors, and the gorgeous genius of colorists, engravers, and paper-rulers.

This gentleman is ably sustained and seconded in the performance of these arduous duties, by a sable-haired associate, who makes it his business to stroll cheerfully up and down the enclosed space behind the counter, rubbing his hands from time to time, as in token of internal satisfaction at the success of their joint efforts, and dashing down upon the counter such wares as a sagacious glance at his audience satisfies him are most likely to be competed for.

On some occasions one or other of the black-haired gentlemen behind the counter condescends to be facetious, and says remarkably funny things for the special benefit and solace of the citizens underneath. This department properly belongs to the auctioneer, but is incidentally filled by the feeder, with such chance morsels of humor as may suggest themselves to him as he rambles to and fro.

Into this oblong region of sale, as one of the resorts where his plans might be furthered, Puffer one evening made his way.

"Gentlemen," cried the black-haired auctioneer, with increased animation as Puffer Hopkins entered—discovering, perhaps, in the peculiar costume and manner of that excellent young gentleman some indications of a melodramatic tendency—"gentlemen, here's the primest article I've offered to-night; this is 'Brimstone Castle,' a native melodrama, as performed one hundred nights at the Bowery theatre, Bowery, New York. The hero of this piece, gentlemen, is a regular salamander, and could take out a policy in any company in this city at a low hazard; he's fireproof. In the first act, he appears sitting on a log, meditating; is suddenly surprised and taken by a band of savages of a red-ochre complexion, from whom he escapes by ruthlessly cutting off the right leg of every mother's son of them—rushes over a bridge—rescues a lady with dishevelled hair, and a small boy in her hand; climbs up a cat-aract, waves his cap to the rescued lady, loses his appetite, and is finally retaken by the savages, and burnt at the stake for an hour—when he walks out of the flame, advances to the foot-

lights, and, with a very cheerful smile on his countenance, announces 'Brimstone Castle' for the next twelve nights, with an extra savage and fresh fagots every night. How much, gentlemen? Going, going. How much?—it's a masterpiece, gentlemen—a perfect work of art. How much?"

The melo-drama was banded about for more than a quarter of an hour among sundry young gentlemen in round-crowned hats, with sleek, shining heads of black hair and broad-skirted blue coats, but finally fell to the lot of a bidder with a stout voice, just one of those voices that are irresistible in an auction-room, and a terror to gentlemen who desire cheap purchases.

"I now offer you," cried the auctioneer, "one of the most astonishing and wonderful works of the present day. It's full of thought, gentlemen, expressed in the very happiest words out of Todd's Johnson and Noah Webster, as clear as a moonbeam, gentlemen, and profound as the Atlantic. It treats of various subjects, such as"—here the auctioneer turned the pages of the book in his hand rapidly, after the manner of a quarterly reviewer, with the hope of gleaming a comprehensive knowledge of its contents; but, judging by the face of ineffable despair he assumed after thrusting his nose half-a-dozen times between the leaves, with little success—"excuse me," he continued, smiling sardonically on his audience, "it would be presumptuous in me, a plain, unlearned citizen, to undertake to convey to your minds the substance of a volume like this. Gentlemen, I'll read you a passage from the introduction, which explains itself:—"Ponds have presented turtles in two aspects—either as turtles or as not turtles. In the one, turtle, the living, breathing, air-cased creature, the individual in his pneumatic being, sitting on a rock, pond-centred, is mighty, supernal, vastly infinite—more than frogdom at bottom, blind-eel, or muscle life. Not he theirs, or for them, but they nothing, save for him. Outward world—to them, mud-encompassed—otherwise dead as door-nail. In the other, slidden from pond-centred rock down to the depths of the unsearchable, frogdom, blind-eel, and muscle life—each more than turtle. He theirs, being thick-headed, obfuscated by lack of light, and doltish;—and for them, he little or nothing save a black lump, part of the general pond-bottom, pavement, chips, wind, gas, snake-grass, and bulrushes."

It need scarcely be added that the lucid work on which the auctioneer was engaged, was nothing more nor less than a volume of transcendental lectures. Puffer Hopkins detected the same burly voice bidding for this—and triumphing in its bid—that he had heard twice before.

At this juncture a member of the great fraternity of lay bishops—in other words a very worthy cartman in his short frock—came in, and supposing, from the few words that he caught as he entered, that the work in hand was illustrative of some new and improved

method of "bobbing for eels," was rash enough to invest seven shillings in the purchase of a second copy. Paying his money very awkwardly at the counter, out of a blind-pocket in his cart-frock—he carried his purchase to a lamp in another quarter of the auction-room, and proceeded, very slowly and painfully, to enlighten himself on the favorite pursuit of eel-bobbing. He bobbed, however, in that pond to very little purpose—and becoming confused and horribly enraged at the constant recurrence of the phrases a "oneness," an "obscure and unreachable infinite," "divergence toward central orbits," and "revolutionary inwardnesses"—intemperately sold it (for six cents and a fraction) to a match-boy, who stood by with a basket ready to catch such purchases as might prove unavailable or disrelishing to the buyers. "There's an acre of fog-bank there, boy," said the cartman from between his teeth, "take it away. My horse has a better head for writings, and authorships, and what not, than the stupid journeyman fellow that spoked this wheel together. Just away with it."

"If there's a patriot in the room," continued the salesman, "a single young or middle-aged gentleman that loves his country and the story of her achievements, let him come forward and lay down his one dollar fifty. I offer you, gentlemen, the 'Battle of Bloody Puddle,' a narrative poem, in six books. This masterpiece of genius has nine heroes, each one of whom accomplishes more in the way of slaughter, swordsmanship, and small-talk, from various elevations, peaks, cliffs, and hill-tops, than any nine heroes ever let loose on the world before. The stanza is irregular, to correspond with the thought, which is very wild and superhuman. The chief hero—the A No. 1—pattern warrior, is discovered by moonlight, sharpening his sword on a boulder of granite, in two nimble-foot octosyllabic stanzas—he loses his scabbard and temper in four Spenserian—entering a cave to conceal himself from the bloody British foe, who are tracking him about like dogs, in twenty-five hexameters—but recovers both in an eleven-syllabled song, in which he grows very happy about wine, war, and woman, particularly Isobel the fair—until, all at once, he discovers a cloud on the moon, which reminds him to prepare for a few elegiac verses and death. He ultimately hangs himself in a hemlock sapling, and leaves his pocket-book, with a counterfeited bill and two forged letters in it, to his Isobel, bidding her, in a brief, touching, epistolary farewell, never to part with these relics of his affection—never, never! which it isn't very likely she ever will, particularly the counterfeits. The rest of the poem corresponds, how much, how much? Cheap—going cheap—as politicians' consciences, a penny a dozen. It's yours, sir, at twenty-five cents. It's perfectly ruinous to sell this work at that price," sighed the auctioneer, wheeling round and stolidly receiving from his assistant a bundle of two dozen more of the same.

There was something in the voice of the bidder who had borne off the chief purchases of the evening, that excited the curiosity of Puffer Hopkins; he thought he had heard it before, and, to ascertain the owner, now mounted a bench and peered over the heads of the audience toward the quarter whence it had issued.

In a remote angle of the auction-room apart from the crowd, in a little domain of his own, stood a square broad-breasted gentleman, with his arms folded and gazing at the auctioneer with a fixed and intense look that could not have been readily surpassed by a Spanish inquisitor, or a petty justice reproving a constable. The fury of his demeanor was heightened by the close buttoning of his coat, to the very throat, the inflation of his coat skirts with a thick bundle of newspapers and a large bandanna handkerchief, the strapping of his pantaloons firmly down upon the boot, and still further by his being a gentleman of moderate stature, in whom, it is well-known, fierceness is natural and quite becoming. It was this gentleman that bid for the melo-drama, the poem of Bloody Puddle, and the volume of Transcendental Lectures; and, now that he had attained a full view of his person, Puffer felt quite sure that he knew him. Pushing through the mass of bidders, he reached the little Zahara which this gentleman's frowns and dignity had created for himself.

"Mr. Fishblatt, I think," said Puffer, respectfully contemplating the figure before him.

"The same, sir," responded the broad-breasted gentleman, starting back, a pace or two, dropping his brows, and regarding the questioner steadily for a minute or more. "You are one of our speakers I believe," continued Mr. Fishblatt, still maintaining his survey, "one of the oratorical youth of Fogfire Hall—am I right?"

"You are," answered Puffer Hopkins: "I had the honor of speaking before you at the last general meeting; you were a vice-president."

"What!" cried Mr. Fishblatt in an earnest whisper, "you are not the young gentleman that used the simile of the rainbow? On my soul you are; don't blush, my dear sir, and turn every color in a minute, for that convicts you at once. I'm glad to see you, it's quite a treat. Take my hand, Mr. Hopkins."

Hereupon Mr. Fishblatt took possession of Puffer Hopkins' right hand, shook it strenuously, and then, turning to the auctioneer on service, said:

"That man's worthy to be a Quarterly Reviewer. He's a Jeffrey, a Babbington Macaulay, sir; an Edward Everett, with the devil in him. He tells books by the smell of the leather. And see how daintily he holds an annual up, as a fishmonger does a bass by the tail, so as to send the circulation to the head, and give the eyes a life-like look. Don't he play on the leaves and illustrations like a musical genius?"

See, my good sir, how he displays that volume with colored plates, it's like a glimpse into the fall woods. This is the shop for sound criticism; writers that are disdainfully treated in the weeklies and monthlies needn't be afraid to come here; if they're hacked and hewed so that their best friend couldn't know them, all they need do is to huddle themselves into a coarse blue-cloth apparel and throw themselves before that black-haired gentleman, and they'll have a blast sounded in their behalf that will bring every two and six pence in the place rattling on the counter."

While the broad-breasted gentleman was engaged elaborating this artful encomium on his friend, the auctioneer had produced a huge bundle of controversial tracts and almanacs, black with wood-cuts, and dashed them upon the counter with great spirit, at which Mr. Fishblatt started, again grasped Hopkins by the hand, gave him the street and number of his residence, and urged him to call speedily.

"You can't mistake the house; it's a red front with tall chimney-pots—grenadier pots we call them—and a slab of brass on the door with 'Halsey Fishblatt' in large text. Any of the hackmen on the square can direct you, for they can all read my plate as they stand, nearly two rods off. Come soon!"

Pouring out his passages of description and invitation vehemently, Mr. Fishblatt gave Puffer a strenuous good-night, advanced and threw his card upon the counter, and thrusting his right hand into the breast of his coat, marched out of the auction-room with great vigor and self-possession.

Now that the chief bidder, who had held the room in awe by his preeminent and majestic manner of calling the price, had departed, the minor customers immediately swelled into consequence, and a horrible conflict was forthwith engendered betwixt the match-boy—whose imagination always kindled at the slightest suggestion of a goblin—a small retail clerk, who had sympathies with coffins and family vaults, as he slept every night in an unwholesome and grave-like cabin at the rear of the dry-goods shop; and a broken-down gentleman—a speculator in cemeteries—who was on the look-out for information on sepulchral subjects.

"Here's a rare morsel for you, my lads," said the auctioneer, whose style grew more familiar on the departure of the majestic Fishblatt, "a dainty mouthful, I can tell you. *'The Vision of the Coffin-maker's Prentice'*,—a story in manuscript—never published. It's a copyright, boys, as good as new in first hands. It's said the author starved to death because the publishers wouldn't buy his book; they could import goblins and bugbears cheaper than they could be grown on the spot." "The biggest bugbears always come from abroad," said the feeder, pausing a moment from his rambles, facing the audience, and laying both hands on the counter. "Come bid up, will ye? Don't go to sleep if you please, in that corner. Others



say the author choked himself with a chicken bone—nobody believes that. Poets and poultry have never been on good terms, that I could learn. Will the band be good enough to strike up?"

"Sixpence—there's a dodge!" cried the match-boy.

"I'll go nine," said the retail clerk; "that's a more superlative go, I know."

"Nine and one," cried the match-boy, reddening in the face, and glancing spitefully at the retail bidder.

"No penny bids in this shop," interposed the auctioneer, authoritatively. "Try again, gentlemen—yours, twelve and a half—twelve and a half!"

This last was the bid of the cemetery speculator.

"Twelve and a half. Fifteen, fifteen, fifteen—one and nine." The bids ran on; the auctioneer chanced to turn the volume toward Puffer Hopkins, who discovered at the side of one of the pages, a pen-and-ink drawing of a stout gentleman standing in a coffin, with his right arm outstretched as if on the point of beginning a speech. Not knowing but that this might be some new exercise in oratory, and seeing at once the facilities for the pathetic afforded by a snug-built coffin, Puffer entered the field, and, overtopping all competition by a half-dollar bid, paid the purchase-money in silver—which it employed him some ten minutes to hunt into a corner of his pocket and secure—and bore it away.

In less than a quarter of an hour he was at his own room in the Fork, and called in his poor neighbor, the tailor, and by the light of a dim candle (snuffers not being within the appointments of his establishment), entered upon the perusal of his new-bought story.

The manuscript was bound in a black linen cover, worn threadbare and ragged by much handling; was ornamented with rude drawings of crossbones and tombstones, with quaint inscriptions on the margin; and the leaves were spotted in various places, and the ink faded, as if many burning tears had fallen on the page.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE VISION OF THE COFFIN-MAKER'S 'PRENTICE.

"WHAT is more natural than that the thoughts of Sam Totton, the coffin-maker's 'prentice, should be running on death's-heads and grinning skulls, and damp, dark vaults, deep down in the earth; with now and then a cheerful feeling of the pleasantness of country churchyards, with tombstones interspersed among sweet-scented apple-trees, and rich green palls of bright meadow-grass spreading over the grave. Now and then, too, he might think of ghosts, releasing themselves from the grave and taking a night's ramble, and whistling down tall chim-

neys in cities, or glaring in, with great cold eyes, at farmhouse-windows, and frightening the quiet circle at the fireside with a dread token of death near at hand, or some heavy evil about to burst on the unlucky house. By the hour would the young 'prentice sit in the undertaker's shop, meditating on the sorry chances of life, the wonderful demand for coffins in the summer months, and the strange world into which many merry, stout gentlemen, and joyous ladies, would ere long be transported, screwed close down in the cruel coffins that stood in a grim row before him.

"Some he knew would stretch themselves quietly at length, and fall asleep; others would fight and wrestle, like very demons, ere they could be brought to bear to be shut down and cabined in for ever; and others again, in whom life was furious and not to be readily extinguished, would smite and dash their deadly hands against the coffin-lid, and would cry out, in voices stifled in the damp, thick clay, to be freed.

"With this turn of mind, the 'prentice was sitting one night in the shop, on an undertaker's stool, and watching the various shadows that came through the door, as the August sun settled in the sky. Now the shadow would flit in at one coffin, filling it only breast-high; then, shifting itself, it would take entire possession of a child's, that stood next; and so flitting past, from one to the other, it brought into Sam's mind the thought how these coffins would one day be tenanted, and what manner of people it might be that should be laid in the coffins that stood about him—large and small—and how soon they would all be filled and borne silently away.

"The thought had scarcely formed itself in Sam's mind, when the shop bell was rung very gently; a glass door that was between him and the street was opened, and a figure, more woe-begone, wretched, and disconsolate, than he had ever before beheld, presented himself, and paused for a moment, just long enough for the 'prentice to take note of his appearance. His eyes were wild, and sunken far behind pale, ghastly, hollow cheeks, in which there was no drop of blood; his head was without covering of any sort, except a shock of uncombed, matted hair, and he limped sadly forward on disproportioned, infirm legs, in scanty apparel, and, with an apologetic appeal in his looks to the young 'prentice, shambled away into a remote corner of the shop, and planted himself as nearly upright and with as great show of decorum as he could, in a cheap pine coffin that stood by itself.

"Sam felt strongly inclined to enter into conversation with the poor figure, and to learn by what chances it had been brought into that lean and melancholy beggary. Ere he could do this, the door was pushed forcibly open, and a portly personage entered, and, stalking across the shop with great dignity and majesty of bearing, proceeded to an inspection of the coffins; going



close up to them, examining nicely the grain of the wood—yea, even smelling of it, and turning away with an air of vast disdain whenever it proved to be cedar or baywood—the quality of the muslin, and the action of the hinges. After turning up a majestic nose, discolored slightly by the use of wine or table-beer, at two thirds of the undertaker's assortment, the portly gentleman at length pitched upon a magnificent tabernacle of mahogany, with fine rolling hinges, that could not jar on his delicate ear when he should come to be fastened in, and an enormous silver plate, with a chased border of cheerful flowers, that took away the very appearance of death. Having concluded to occupy this tenement, the portly gentleman proceeded to take possession, and with great difficulty crowded himself into the coffin; forgetting, however, to put off his hat, which remained fixed on his head in a very sturdy and consequential position; and there he stood, bolt-upright, staring at the young 'prentice as if it was his determination to chill him into an icicle. Sam was, however, not so easily over-awed, but, on the contrary, felt greatly inclined to burst into a good hearty laugh at the comic figure the nice portly gentleman made in his dainty, brass-hinged, mahogany coffin.

"As he turned away his eyes, they encountered a spectacle which came nigh changing their merry humor to tears; for a sweet lady, all in white, floated gently past him, of a fair, meek demeanor, and bearing in either hand two little children, a boy and girl, whose faces ever turned toward the lady's, with an expression of intense and tender regard. Clinging to her with a firm grasp, they glided by, and tried at first to rest in one coffin together, which proving ineffectual, they chose coffins neighboring to each other, and, quietly assuming their places, they stood calm and patient, as if death had fallen kindly upon them; the two children turning reverently toward their dear mother, and hanging on her pale, sweet look, with passionate constancy.

"Directly in the steps of these visitors, there entered a personage who, judging from the dotted apparel in which he presented himself, might have been the ghost of some black-spotted card or other, come to take a hand with Sam's master, who was greatly addicted to the sport and entertainment of whist-playing. However this might be, the new comer entered with a couple of somersets, turned about when he had reached the centre of the shop, took off his piebald cap, and made a leg to Sam, and then scrambled into a coffin directly opposite that of the portly gentleman.

"For a long time these two personages stood regarding each other; the one grinning and hitching up his leg, as if he felt the irksomeness of confinement, and the other, with a solemn look of consequence and self-importance, determined the very grave itself should not get the better of him.

"This is pleasant!" said the portly gentleman, at length, with a slight tone of irony and condescension, to his neighbor the clown.

"Very; but not so airy as the ring!" answered the merry-andrew.

"Nor as snug as a corporation pantry, with a cut of cold tongue between two debates," returned the portly gentleman. "But then it has its advantages. No taxes—mind that (those tax-gatherers used to be the torment of my life)—no ground-rents, poor-rates, no beggar's dinging at the front-door bell."

"But consider," responded the clown, "though we lodge in a cellar, as it were, a good underground, six steps down, where are the oysters and brandy? Did that occur to you?"

"I confess it did not," said the portly gentleman, slightly staggered; "but I was thinking now what a choice storage this would be for half a gross of tiptop champagne, with the delicate sweat standing on the outside of the bottles."

"There's no room for a somerset here, either," said the clown.

"Nor to deliver a speech in," answered the portly gentleman. "See, I couldn't stretch out my right arm half its length, to make even my first gesture: rather a cramped, close place, after all."

"Vanities! vanities!" cried the Poor Figure, from his distant coffin, unable to suppress his feelings any longer. "Cramped and close is it! It's a paradise compared to the dark, damp dungeons on the earth, where the living body is pent up in dreary walls, and the cheerful light of day comes in by stealth through grim bars; when the world moves past the poor prisoner's window without a look of recognition; when no man's hand takes his in a congenial grasp: is that life, d'ye say? He is dead, I tell you—dead!" cried the Poor Figure, in a voice of piercing agony, "as if the marble slab was laid upon his breast, and the grave-diggers piled mountains upon his corse."

"Many's the jolly time," resumed the portly gentleman, without much heed to the Poor Figure's declamation, "we've had at city suppers. How tenderly the turkey's breast—bought by the commonalty, purchased by the sweat of the hard-worked million, yielded to the shining knife; how sweetly the popular Port wine and the public porter glided down the throat. Choice times were those, my good sir, when the city paid the hackman's fare for dainty rides to the suburbs, and when we made the poor devil paupers stand about us licking their thin chaps, while we rolled the rich morsels under our tongues. But now," he added in a rather melancholy tone, "I am little better than one of the heathen. I smell nothing but the musty earth; my gay apparel is falling piecemeal into doleful tatters, and I can get nothing to chew upon but an occasional mouthful of black mould, that sadly impedes digestion, if one had any digestion in such a place as this, worth speaking of."

"Think but of one thing, sir," said the

clown, with an uneasy movement in his coffin, 'and you can not fail to be content. Where are the duns in this new empire of ours? We are as inaccessible to the vile creatures as the crown of an iceberg. Why, sir, there was a poor wretch of a collector that haunted me for a vile debt of twenty-two and sixpence, until I was sorely tempted to take his very life, and put myself upon contrivances how I could take it with most pain and torture to his body and soul. I thought of all sorts of man-traps, and pitfalls in blind alleys, and leaden-headed bludgeons; and at length—heaven save the mark!—I pitched upon the scheme of carrying him off in a balloon, and, about two miles up, letting him slip, with a cord about his neck, and hang dangling by the neck, until dead, ten thousand feet high. He was got safely into the balloon by a dexterous accomplice, was carried up, and, now that my mind was at ease as to the result, I went home to take a quiet cup of tea, and to settle up my books, meaning to run my pen through the twenty-two and six as a settled account, when—the Lord save us—who should knock gently at my door, and march in with his old impudent smile, than my old enemy the collector, with his customary phrases—hoping he didn't intrude, and, if it wasn't too much trouble, he would like to have the small amount of his bill, which, as I knew, had been standing some time. The rope had broken, sir, just as they passed over my house; the vile little rascal had pitched upon the roof, and, making the best of circumstances, had walked down my scuttle, and availing himself of the opportunity, had looked in with his cursed little bill. We're free from the scamp now: I'm not sure—isn't that he in the pine coffin?'

"Sure enough, there stood the Poor Figure, leaning toward them, and listening in an attitude of intense regard, to every word that had fallen from the lips of the clown.

"'I am the man!' he cried with great emphasis, when the clown had ended; 'none other but I. On the little paltry debt of twenty-two and sixpence hung my old father's life, who lay rotting in the cold jail, waiting for deliverance, which I had promised him many times, with as false a tongue as man could. I said I would come to-morrow at such an hour, and the next to-morrow at such an hour—naming, in my desire to bring him definite hope, the very minute and second—and I did not come. Was not that a lie? And did you not stand behind me, another liar? How many lying, false tongues, wagged with yours and mine, in that little business of the twenty-two shillings and sixpence, God only knows! I forgive you the debt: the old man's bones are at the bottom of the prison well, where he perished; they should plead for truth from its gloomy womb, and have a voice to shake prison walls and fetters from manly limbs: God grant they may.'

"The Poor Figure had scarcely ended, when the door was slowly opened, and disclosed a meek little man, clad in a neat suit of plain

black, with two snow-white bands falling under his chin. His gait and aspect denoted many solemn thoughts, and with a slow pace, and a seeming consciousness of the gloomy realm in which he was treading, he advanced to an obscure corner of the place, and, folding his arms calmly upon his breast, stood silently in his coffin, his head only inclined a little to one side, as if he expected momentarily to catch the sound of the last great trump, and to welcome the summons.

"Sam heard a noise in the hall, as of some person shuffling about in heavy boots in search of the door, and, after the lapse of a few minutes, a large man, in a white coat with a dirty cape, a ponderous leather hat, and a club in his hand, swaggered boldly in, and after looking about him for a while, as if on the watch for a ghost or apparition, walked quietly off, and taking his station in a comfortable cedar coffin in the middle of the apartment—obviously mistaking it for a watch-box—fell gently asleep. From all that he saw, Sam imagined that this was a city watchman; and the presumption is, that he was not far wrong.

"After a salubrious slumber of some ten minutes or more, this gentleman waked up, and thrusting his head out of his coffin, stretched his neck, and gazed up and down the apartment, and then toward the ceiling.

"'How the devil's this?' he at length exclaimed, 'the lamps are out early to-night, and the alderman must have put the moon in his pocket, I guess: that's the way they serve us poor charleys; we wouldn't catch a rogue more than once an age, if we didn't take them into porter-houses and get 'em drunk, and study their physiognomies, and so set them a stealing half fuddled!'

"'What's that you say, my man?' cried the voice of the portly gentleman. 'What fault have you to find with the corporation, I'd like to know? Do you pretend to impeach their astronomy, sir, and to say, sir, that the moon doesn't rise when she is set down for in the almanac? I'd have you know, sir, the moon's bespoke three months ahead; and that the oil-dealers know when they put a short allowance in the lamps! I'll have you broke, if you haven't a care how you speak of an alderman: a word to the wise in your ear, sir.'

"The watchman was making up his mouth for a reply, and it is impossible to say what choice specimens of rhetoric might not have been furnished between them, but, at this moment, the shop-bell was rung with great fury. Sam started up with wonderful alacrity—distinguishing the ring at once from all other possible rings—and receiving, as he advanced to the front of the warehouse, a thumping blow on the side of the head, was asked what he meant by leaving the shop open at that time of the night, and coffins out at the door to be rotted by the night-dew and chalked up by young vagabonds in the street?

"This was of course Sam's master. Sam's

visitors mistook it, however, for a summons of a very different kind; the watchman, supposing it to be an alarm of fire, rattled his club against the coffin-side and sprang for the door; the portly gentleman thought it a melodious supper-bell, and, disengaging himself, exhibited equal activity; the Poor Figure followed, hobbling along like a waiter in a hurry; the clown, for the call-boy's notice, and somerseted through the door; the sweet lady in white, for the last peal of the Sunday summons, and glided away with her children at her side; and the little parson, smoothing down his bands and calming his thoughts to the purpose of the hour, taking it for the Wednesday evening lecture-call; and so the company dispersed.

"Sam, busying himself in obeying the undertaker's orders, soon closed the warehouse; and as he moved past the empty coffins, to his bed at the end of the shop, and thought how they had been lately filled, it occurred to him how inopportunately men might be laid in their graves; debtors lying nearest neighbors to catchpoles and deputies, whose approach was the curse of their life; the clown and the alderman, parsons and profligates, in a tender vicinage; tapsters and the favorites of the pure stream, perchance murderers and their victims, and breakers of troth and violators of faith pledged to woman, in a proximity so close, that the skeleton arm outstretched might reach into the grave where the broken heart lay, and take its cold and ineffectual hand back into that which had done it such deadly wrong. On judgment day, when the trump sounds among burials like these, if aught of fiery or human passion remain, what awful scenes will bear witness to the fancy of the young 'prentice-boy—when forms shall start up and have life again but to glare on other wakened forms—to loathe, curse, scorn, and abhor that on which they gaze! Grave-yards would then know a strife and passionate conflict, that battle-fields could not match, with all their sanguinary stains, and cries of horror, vengeance, or despair."

## CHAPTER VII.

### PUFFER HOPKINS RECEIVES AN APPOINTMENT.

TOWARD the close of an afternoon, a few days after the visit of Puffer Hopkins to the auction-room, a deformed little personage was strolling through the street, with his arms nearly to his elbows in his breeches'-pockets, his head thrown back a trifle, and his eyes turned up as if he were in the very depths and profundities of a cogitation of some consequence; in short, it was our gentleman of the Bottom Club, who practised upon certain pockets, as has been seen, on a former occasion.

"Three pair of fowls at three shillings, makes nine," said the little gentleman, "the old red rooster at five shillings—though his liver's disordered, for I smelt his breath this morning—

fourteen. That's for after-breakfast work. Then before, there's twenty pound of hoop, at twopence a pound, and a sheet of copper, seven pound, at fivepence—thirty-five and forty, as good as seventy-five; and all the afternoon for a holyday to find out where this Puffer Hopkins lives, and to hatch out an acquaintance with him. There's something brewing in the wind 'twixt him and that shabby old lunatic, Hobbleshank; something going on that ought to be put a stop to; and as the wice chance-seller of law won't interfere to separate such good friends, we'll see what Mr. Small, Ish Small, of Pell street, or thereabouts, can do." He walked a few paces farther, and again broke out, "Let me catch that old fellow trying any of his tricks on Uncle Close, as he did ten years ago, when he pitched his family-watch at my crown, and we'll see if there a'n't a spice of sport about it, Strike up, old 'un, I'm here!"

Saying this, he trotted down the street, turned into a by-way, crossed that at a good pace, and speedily reached a corner building, from which a great striped flag was waving and a tumult of voices issuing. Into this he made his way, selecting a suitable position, and at the proper moment (a great deal of the same sort of business going on at the time), he called out the name of Puffer Hopkins, which was duly entered by one of the clerks of the meeting upon a roll, and the agile little performer, thereupon, departed.

This time he selected a different course, striking straight toward the heart of the city, for several blocks, and emerging upon an open square. He now looked about him for several minutes, indulging in a severe scrutiny of the neighboring buildings, and at length fixed his eye upon a dingy, yellow house, which stood facing the square, and forming the fork or extreme point of two streets.

"I think I should know the house by the description," he said, measuring it again with his eye from top to bottom; "it isn't quite a palace, that's clear; I don't believe the Grand Signior lives here, nor his highness the chief of the Seneca tribes. There's considerable poverty written in dirty paint all about the front; and, judging by the windows, I guess it's had a hard fight with the brick-front across the way, and got an eye or two put out." At this moment the light of a lamp fell from a window of the upper story, and Mr. Small, turning his face up toward it, exclaimed, "His light, by all that shines! It a'n't a astral, anyhow! He's studying a speech, or mixing a dose of resolutions, now, and I'll step in and surprise him. I've no doubt the stairs will hold out till I get up and down, although they look as if they was on their last legs."

Climbing a narrow and ill-arranged way, he attained the topmost landing, where he stood for some time, in doubt which door, of the many that presented themselves, to select, when, turning suddenly, as he heard some one ascend-

ing the stairs, he stumbled, and falling against a door, dashed it open, and landed in the very centre of a room. It would be, perhaps, a sufficient description of this apartment, to say that it was hardly large enough to fight a boxing-match in, with the attendant spectators; that, besides the person of Puffer Hopkins, it held the heads of Demosthenes and John Randolph, a solitary chair, a small auction-bought desk, and a long fragment of looking-glass established in one corner.

"Your humble servant, sir; your most obedient! I thought I'd just stop as I was passing, and tell you you are a regularly-elected member of the Vigilance Committee of this ward!" said the visitor, grasping his cap in both hands, assuming a countenance of great simplicity and innocence, and travestying a bow, a good deal in the style of a theatrical waiter, retiring.

"By whose goodness is this?" asked Hopkins, eagerly.

"Mine, for lack of a better, sir. I thought it would be a little sort of a treat, now that strawberries are out of season?" answered the little gentleman, licking his lips.

"Yours, sir?" exclaimed Puffer, seizing him by the hand; "I owe you a debt of gratitude for life for this. Don't I know you, sir? you are a member of the club, I believe: the memorable and immortal club—the Bottom, I mean?"

Receiving an answer in the affirmative, he ran on in a very fluent and enthusiastic style, pronouncing his introduction to the Bottom Club one of the most fortunate incidents of his life; his acquaintance with the gentleman before him as one of the greatest pleasures he had ever known; said that he was attached to his party and his principles—no man more; and that he was resolved to perform his duty as a member of the Vigilance Committee with the utmost zeal, promptitude, and despatch.

The stranger, although a small man, was not a little astonished at this tide of eloquence (for Puffer Hopkins was in the middle of a declamation to his looking-glass on some supposed festive occasion when the visitor had broken in, and which declamation, in the flutter of the interruption, he applied to his unexpected advent)—we say he was not a little surprised; but it was with main effort he subdued his mirth, when, at the end of all these elegant promises and professions, Puffer Hopkins asked him "what he had to do?"

Now there are many things that a member of a vigilance committee, giving a liberal construction to the designation, might be supposed to be engaged in with great propriety. Possessing the sharp eye that of right belongs to a functionary so entitled, he should pierce into the heart of hidden abuses, following them with close, wary steps, into obscure dens and haunts—getting at awful secrets of crime, veiled from all other eyes—detecting, through the world, in their thousand disguises and hypocritical mantles, fraud, cruelty, domestic wrong, and the whole brood of cozenage and knavery.

It was pretty clear that it was to none of these varieties of service that Puffer Hopkins was expected to devote his very promising talents; and of this Puffer himself had some faint conception, for when he puzzled his brain in search of the duties of his new character, it did not occur to him that it had ever been the business of any politician, past or present, or would be in all future time, to subserve in any possible way the plain, simple, every-day interests of humanity.

At this question, Mr. Small laughed; not, however, as if any circumstance of the present interview, or relating thereto, had struck him as at all humorous, but as if his thoughts were fixed upon some remote incident, away off a good many miles, and arising from such innocent sources as might be supposed to move the mirth of so simple-minded a gentleman. Laugh he did, however, with such violence as to compel him to place a hand upon one of his ribs, while he planted his elbow against the wall to support the other.

From all which, it might be presumed that the little gentleman thought it quite a diverting question, to be asked what the members of a vigilance committee had to do. Laughing, and still holding his sides, the dwarf gentleman again burlesqued a bow, and hurried from the apartment, leaving Puffer Hopkins in a state of no little wonder and bewilderment.

Determined, nevertheless, to acquire a more definite knowledge of the functions and duties of this majestic office, Puffer snatched up his hat, shifted himself into a bright blue coat with intense brass buttons, and went forth. In the excitement and anxiety of mind resulting from the sudden knowledge of his appointment, he had enjoyed a brisk walk of two squares or more before it occurred to him that it would greatly further his inquiries if he would take a minute or two to consider where they should be made.

After many misgivings and fluctuations of opinion, he at length fixed on Mr. Fishblatt, and, for a variety of reasons, selected that gentleman as an adviser in his present emergency; to whose residence he turned his steps with all becoming expedition. Glancing about for an overgrown door-plate and a red front surmounted with gigantic chimney-pots, Puffer was not long in discovering the domicile of which he was in search; which domicile was, however, adorned, beyond the description of Mr. Fishblatt, by an oblong sign stretched across the entire front, and cutting the house unpleasantly into halves, indicating that the safe, cheap, and accommodating corporation of the Phoenix Fire Insurance Company harbored within.

Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, therefore, inhabited a second floor; and after a due performance on a door-bell, and ringing all the customary changes, Puffer was led by a frouzy-haired servant girl through the hall, up one flight of stairs, and into a small supplemental building, in a small room whereof—comprehending the entire breadth and length of the same—he came upon

Mr. Fishblatt, seated grandly in a very high-backed chair, holding in his outstretched arms an enormous newspaper, on which his eyes were fixed as keenly and comprehensively as if he expected by the perusal of the sheet before him at that very time, and the mastery of its contents, to become one of the finest scholars and profoundest critics in the country. He was assisted in the achievement of this mighty purpose, if he entertained it, by a gorgeous spirit-lamp which was fed by a ball, and blazed away on a table at his side like a meteor.

On the entrance of Puffer Hopkins, the reader sprang to his feet, cast down the paper, and rushing anxiously toward his visiter, fixed upon his right hand with the tenacity of a griffin. "My dear fellow," cried Mr. Fishblatt, earnestly, "I'm glad to see you. Down with your hat. Make yourself at home. This looks like home, doesn't it? Everybody thinks so that comes here. I don't suppose you could find a snugger room of the kind in the whole planetary system. You see how roomy and quiet it is: here are all my books around me—pamphlets, sermons, speeches, documents from Congress, documents from Legislatures, catalogues, tracts, and lexicons. And look here, sir!" turning about in his chair, and running his finger rapidly along a line of great, grim volumes that stood against the wall—"a bound newspaper from every state in the Union, written up in tip-top style; classical, sir, every word of them—classical and immortal! What do you say now, sir! Isn't it very nice?"

"I certainly think it is," answered Puffer, contemplating the questioner with considerable astonishment.

"There's something on your mind," continued Mr. Fishblatt, scarcely waiting an answer; "I know it; I see it plainly—something that harasses and worries you. You don't sleep; you can't rest: it troubles you so. Come, out with it, my boy; let's have it at once. What is it that makes you look so anxious?"

"To tell the truth, I'm a member of the Vigilance Committee, and don't know what my duties are," answered Puffer; "and I have taken the liberty to come and ask you what I shall do in my new capacity."

"If I was a member of a vigilance committee," said Mr. Fishblatt, regarding Puffer Hopkins with great gravity and steadiness, "I should consider it my duty to have immense telescopes constructed; and I would plant them, sir, where I could look into the very interior of every domicile in the ward, and know what was in every man's pot for dinner six days in the week. This may not be your view of duty, sir; but I should feel bound to have great legers kept, with leaves that opened like doors, and there write down every man's name in large letters; and I'd have a full length of him drawn on the margin, and colored to the life. I'd give his dress, sir, down to the vest buttons, and if there was a mote in his eye, I'd have it there to be cross-examined, when he came up to vote. Now don't say you can't do this—you

haven't the physical strength to keep such a set of books."

"Would you inquire so very particularly," asked Puffer, timidly, for he felt abashed by the grand conceptions of the imaginative Fishblatt, "into the private habits of voters?"

"I would, sir," answered Mr. Fishblatt, peremptorily; "I'd know whether they slept in trundle-bedsteads or high-posts; whether they preferred cold-slaught cut lengthwise or crosswise of the cabbage; whether their shoes were hob-nailed or pegged. Can you tell why I'd do this?"

Puffer Hopkins frankly and heroically confessed that he could not very readily, without the aid of Mr. Fishblatt.

"I knew you couldn't," said that distinguished rhetorician. "Don't you see that the public conduct of the man is foreshadowed in his personal habits? A man that wears red flannel shirts is always for war: a man that employs night-caps is opposed to riots. The voters that browbeat their servants at home, sir, always cry out for strengthening the executive. Go into that man's house over the way, sir, the house with the meek salmon-colored door; that door is a hypocrite and deceiver, sir! Climb to the fourth shelf of his pantry and you'll find two red-handled rawhides; that man approves of despatching the Florida Indians by drugging their brandy with ratsbane. That man's on his knees every Sunday in the orthodox chapel, wears out a pair of knee-cushions every year, and has breeches made without pockets to escape the importunities of beggars in the streets and highways. Put him down in your journal, sir, as a knave, a villain, a low base fellow—will you?"

"The laws hardly reach such men," suggested Puffer.

"I'd make them reach," said Mr. Fishblatt, confidently, "I'd stretch 'em till they did reach. I'd hang such men higher than Haman; I'd invent every kind of rack and thumb-screw, and worry their lives out by inches; I'd fill their houses with bugs and alligators: they should have pirates to wait on them at table; and they should sleep with bandits swarming about their beds, great black-whiskered bandits, with pistols charged to the muzzle and always on the full-cock. Would that serve them right?"

"I think it would, strictly speaking," answered Puffer; "but, as a member of a vigilance committee, should I undertake to spy out such abuses?"

"Oh, no; your business is—have I told you what your business is?—to go along the wharves and up into alleys, and down into cellars, and inquire for voters, disseminating the right doctrine by the way, and making everybody of your opinion, by having no opinion at all. Are you on the dock committee, or one of the alley committees?"

"Neither," answered the young politician, "I think mine is known as the rear-building section."

"Are you advised whether there are any old women there, to give iron spectacles to? or

small children, to nurse with gingerbread? or any recent deaths in any of the families, that you may sympathize in the bereavement, by wearing a strip of crape on your hat?"

"I have no instructions," answered Puffer Hopkins.

"Then you had better go prepared for all emergencies—you had better carry a piece of calico under your arm, to cut into gowns; half a dozen papers of confectionary in your pockets; a gross of clay pipes, for the superannuated voters or their aged relatives; a bale of corduroys; and, perhaps, I only suggest this, a basket of sheep's pluck."

"What is this last for?" asked Puffer, gapping with astonishment at the personal services required of him, as a member of the high and mighty ward vigilance committee.

"To wheedle their dogs with," answered Mr. Fishblatt, "if they happen to keep any in the front yard."

Surprised and perplexed by the requisitions of the vigilance branch of the service—as expounded by Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, the extraordinary fervor of whose fancy Puffer Hopkins had not yet quite learned to appreciate—he directed his steps toward his lodgings in the Fork, striving his best to project the means by which he should procure the articles enumerated, and the kind of conveyance by which they were to be transported to voters' houses.

As to the latter, his mind wavered between a porter's go-cart and a butcher boy with broad shoulders, and, as to the first, he had not reached a conclusion when he reached home; where he was opportunely relieved from further perplexity for the present, by having a dirty billet placed in his hands, inviting him to a meeting of the very vigilance committee itself at the headquarters, at half-past seven that evening.

Disposing of a thrifty meal, consisting of two cheap slices of bread, a saucer of onions in vinegar (an excellent thing for the voice), and a bowl of black tea, he whirled his hat half a dozen times about his left hand, applying to its nap, meantime, the sleeve of his right arm, buttoned his coat as smartly as he could, and leaving word that he had gone to a public meeting, the young politician put forth.

A few minutes' rapid walking, for he was behind his time, brought him to the room in which the committee assembled, and halting for a moment for a general survey, he entered, and assumed his seat on a bench against the wall with his fellow-laborers, who were present in great force, looking as vigilant and shrewd-minded as their station required. A member was on his legs expounding, in very animated and felicitous style, the glory to be reaped by any adventurous canvasser, who, in the service of his country and impelled by a desire to transmit a name to his children, should plunge down a certain cellar—which he described—and secure the names of several desperate villains who there harbored with the intent of coming forth as voters at the spring election, and per-

juring themselves in the very face and eye of Heaven.

This gentleman was followed by a second of equal power and comprehensiveness of vision, who declared, on his personal honor and well-known character for integrity, that they might look-out for a riot, and one of a very serious cast. He had said serious cast because the size of the clubs in preparation was unusual. He had a friend (thank Heaven!) whose confidence he believed he possessed. He was a wood-turner, he had been secretly employed to furnish a gross of heavy bludgeons in the disguise of balustrades. For this fact they might take his word. He didn't mention it to alarm any gentleman present. He didn't wish any gentleman to stay at home or to put himself at nurse on election day, to avoid anything unpleasant that might be abroad in the shape of clubs or bludgeons. For his part, he had nothing to fear, he only wished to put gentlemen of the committee on their guard, and to drive them to take into serious consideration the expediency of reviving the use of the ancient helmet.

These words had scarcely escaped him, when a pale young gentleman sprang up from a table at the corner of the room, and offered a resolution embodying the suggestions of his friend; which was promptly seconded by a respectable and worthy tinker across the room, who had a presentiment that the helmets in question must be made of sheet-iron quilted with tin—which would all fall in his line of trade. The resolution was, notwithstanding this able advocacy, doomed not to become an heroic determination of the committee corporate, being extinguished and quenched for ever by a flood of invective and ridicule issuing from a gentleman who condescended to perform journey-work in a hatter's establishment, and who properly enough regarded such an attempt as an invasion of the rights of the guild.

The early part of the evening proved, therefore, very tempestuous and windy; but as soon as the various gusts of debate and declamation had blown over, a very plain-looking gentleman, at about ten o'clock, rose, and beginning in a very soft voice, which seemed to grow softer as he advanced, proved himself to be a very sensible fellow, by calling the attention of the meeting to some little particulars which had been overlooked. These particulars consisted of the division and organization of the committee into sections, enrolling their names in a book, each section having its own head or chairman, and the allotment of their duties to the various members of the committee.

There was the dock committee—they wanted a gentleman on that, who wouldn't feel the inconvenience of a tarpaulin hat, a wide-skirted, shaggy box-coat, with two sepulchral pockets, for his fists to be carried in, at the sides, and who couldn't well live without a segar. Then, they wanted a short man for cellars and areas; a thin man to go up the alleys; a spruce-looking member to visit at the quality houses; a

supple man, of an enterprising turn, for rear-building and garret service, and a jolly-looking, portly dog, to talk with the landlords and tavern-keepers.

The plain man described, in a few words and with becoming modesty, what he thought the duty of the members of the vigilance committee then and there assembled: they should be keen-eyed in discovering voters, artful and insinuating in approaching them, copious of tongue, subtle in argument, and prepared to clinch anything they might choose to assert.

He thought vilifying the opposition wasn't bad, if it was done in a Christian-like way, and by describing them as "some persons," or, "there were people who he (the member) knew couldn't bear the poor; who would take the last potato out of the poor man's pot," and similar fetches of expression.

When this gentleman had occupied the floor for about an hour, Puffer Hopkins very discreetly held himself to be as well advised as to the services required as he was ever likely to be; and determining in his own mind not to be easily outdone and to set about his portion of the task on the morrow, he departed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ADVENTURES OF PUFFER AS A SCOURER.

THE sun had certainly made up his mind, that morning, not to see company; and if all the vigilance committees in the seventeen wards had turned out expressly for that purpose, it would have been impossible for even their well-known and extraordinary astuteness to have detected the slightest glimpse of his benevolent features anywhere in the very murkiest sky of a November day. The forty-five spirited fire-companies of the metropolis—who had seen proper, at a very early hour in the day, to take a run at a horse-shed near Bowling Green, which had extinguished itself the moment it was discovered nothing else could catch from it—might with equal propriety have turned in and stayed at home, smoking long-nines and talking over past achievements; for the rain came down in torrents, and kept every combustible plank in the city as nice and moist as heart could wish.

Omnibus-drivers and hackmen carried a proud head, and looked down on the sinful world of dry-goods men and in-door trades-people, from their box-seats, with an air of pleasant disdain; and the proprietors of livery-stables peered forth from their small office-windows, smiling and making themselves happy and comfortable at the prospect, as Noah might have done on a similar occasion. Pedestrians with umbrellas looked melancholy, and buried themselves in their blue cottons and brown silks to indicate their misanthropy; and pedestrians without umbrellas looked small and miserable,

and making the most of their wrappers, hurried along, in a supreme unconsciousness of the inhabited character of any window they might pass, or the identity of any possible friend in the street.

Others pushed along, thinking more of the respective errands on which they were bound than of any violence of weather, and heeding the plashing shower no more than if it had been sunshine and fair walking. Among these was the resolute Hopkins, who, embowered in a cheap blue cotton umbrella, strided along, bent on the thorough and faithful discharge of his arduous duties as scourer or canvasser of the ward.

He had selected for the first visitation, a rear building in a by-street, inhabited by sundry gentlemen of doubtful politics, and, making all proper speed, he arrived in a short time in the neighborhood where he intended to operate. Opening a blind gate, which worked with a pulley and closed swiftly behind him, Puffer found himself in a square enclosure, filled with carts, fragments of boarding, old iron pots, broken pieces of garden-fence standing against the walls, two cistern-heads, and, at the rear, a row of cheap wooden houses, with the windows dashed out, sundry breaches in the casing, and various red pots, supposed to contain stunted specimens of horticulture, arranged in the upper windows. Directly in the middle of the yard, there stood, under one large ivory-handled umbrella, a couple of well-dressed, white-haired individuals—one of whom was very stout, portly, and commanding, and the other very shrunk, round shouldered, and obsequious—looking up at the buildings; the portly gentleman staring at them with great severity and talking boisterously, and the round shouldered glancing up at the portly gentleman, meekly, and making minutes of what he said.

"Draught of the chimneys, heavy; note that down, will you?" said the portly gentleman, peremptorily.

"I will," said the meek man, "it's down, sir."

"Supposed equal to two factory furnaces, with the blowers on; down with that—and put my initial to it, if you please."

"I have, in large capitals," said the timid gentleman.

"That's right," said the portly gentleman, promptly. "Scuttles always open, and children allowed to smoke burnt rattans—I see one of 'em at it now. Will you mark *that* down?" cried the stout gentleman, evidently very much enraged, and with a startling emphasis that caused the meek man to jump out from under the shelter, which compelled his superior to order him back twice, very distinctly, before he could be induced to return to his duty, and chronicle what fell from the stout gentleman's lips. "They dry their hose at, No. nine, on the back of a rocker before the fire, and use a decayed Dutch-oven at No. eleven—this last attributable to the extravagance of the lower orders, who are too proud to patronise the baker."



"That's a very happy observation," said the meek man, "shall I print it out large, like the play-bills?"

"Stuff!" cried the portly gentleman, smiling haughtily, "just mind your business, and recollect that all private feelings are absorbed in the company's interests, will ye?"

"I'll try," said the meek man, timidly.

"Do! and just say, if you please, that the first floor's occupied by a journeyman lightning-maker."

"A journeyman lightning-maker!" echoed the meek man.

"None of your nonsense, now, Crump—but down with what I tell you; a journeyman lightning-maker in the employ of one of the theatres. Say we are informed that he lives on brandy (brandy's a pretty inflammatory article, I believe, and cases of spontaneous combustion have occurred; put that reflection in a note and mark it J. B. in the corner), and makes lightning in the garret. Now for the cisterns. Have you smelt No. eleven?"

"I have, sir," answered the secretary, making a very face, "and it's uncommon noxious."

"Do you know the cause?" asked the portly gentleman, disdainfully.

"I do not, sir," answered the meek gentleman, groping in his pockets.

"A child—a juvenile small child—that went to a public school, took his own life in despair one day, in that very cistern, sir, because he couldn't spell phthisis, sir!"

"That was strange, wasn't it?"

"Very strange, Crump. The child came home in the afternoon, with the same green bag—take notice, sir—the same green bag on his arm that he'd carried for fourteen months, and said, 'Mother, there's a pain,' laying his hand on his head, 'a great violent pain here.' That was all he said, and then he went up stairs, made up his little couch, tied his wooden horse to a bed-post with a new riband about his neck, put on his Sunday hat and a clean apron, and stepping stealthily down stairs, walked comfortably into the cistern, and ended all his agonies."

"That's a remarkable affair," said the secretary with his mouth and eyes wide open. "Don't you think it's a serious argument against the public schools, sir?"

"It's a smasher, Crump, an extra-hazardous smasher," said the insurance president, for that proved to be his official station. "There's something wrong in the system you may depend on it, or children would never destroy themselves in this way because they can't spell diphthong words of two syllables. Now to business, if you please. Say it's the opinion of the president that no engine will ever consent to draw water from the cistern of No. eleven; that engines can't be expected to take little boys or little girls into their chambers and extinguish their bereaved parents' burning dwellings with the rinsings. Firemen have feelings (this is a moral axiom for the benefit

of the directors), engines have works: and although the coroner did sit on the cistern-lid the better part of an entire night, inquiring into this melancholy case, and sent down several courageous small boys with boat-hooks, and called patriotically into the cistern himself, yet add, the boy was never found; and from the fact of deceased's never having been seen to come out, a strong suspicion prevails in the neighborhood that he is still in; but what makes the corpse so very outrageous and stubborn nobody can say. Is that it, Crump?"

"All down, sir," answered Mr. Crump.

"Stand out from the umbrella, then, if you please, Mr. Crump: business is over. You're Crump and I'm Blinker." And the insurance president looked down upon his assistant in the most commanding fashion.

Crump obeyed, and, withdrawing from the brown-silk protector, stood outside, awaiting the further pleasure of the portly gentleman.

"This is a sweet day, Crump," said the president, contemplating with evident satisfaction the huge drops that plashed in one of the puddles.

"Charming!" said Crump, slyly inserting a cotton pocket-handkerchief between his coat-collar and the back of his neck, for Crump was slightly rheumatic.

"Stocks should rise in weather like this," said Mr. Blinker. "The roofs are all good and wet, cellars under water, and a good number of garrets flooded. Now, if we could have a little rain horizontally, the second stories would be nice and safe. To be sure, families might suffer a little inconvenience, but it would be morally impossible for fires to show themselves, and I should look in the papers for two or three melancholy cases of incendiaries having made way with themselves. It's a pelter, Crump."

"That, I believe, is admitted," answered that worthy individual, with a slight tinge of impudence in his manner—buttoning up his side-pockets, which began to fill, and throwing his hands behind him under his coat-tails, which arrangement, as he stooped forward, formed a commodious roof for the rain to run off at.

"It's lucky we're not in the marine line," continued the president, glancing at the secretary, "goods not under hatches will be nicely soaked, I'm sure, particularly woollens and drabs."

Now it so happened that the unfortunate Crump was the owner of a very pretty pair of woollen drabs—rather old fashioned to be sure—which, very singularly, he was wearing at that very moment as he stood in the shower in the open yard; but, as Mr. Blinker was well known as a benevolent-minded gentleman, and above all manner of personalities, Crump was bound to regard his observation as one of those happy general reflections for which he was equally remarkable.

"The shower comes down so nice and straight," said Mr. Blinker, erecting his umbrella, and drawing himself close under: its



centre, at the same time consulting his watch, "so nice and straight, that it must put out a good many kitchen-fires; which all helps; but it's time to be at the office. Do you go on, Crump, and have the grate well piled, don't spare the coals, for I'm chilly. But stop—whose buildings are these, did you say?"

"I didn't say," answered Mr. Crump, flushing slightly.

"Whose?" cried Mr. Blinker, in his official key, which started the secretary into a small pond.

"Fyler Close's, sir," answered the intelligent Crump, speedily.

"Humph! very well," said Mr. Blinker. "Go on; and don't forget to wheel my chair out and warm my slippers. And if the lime-dealer calls for his policy tell him it isn't made out, and that he may call the first fair day. This is fine weather for slacking that article, Crump; excellent weather to set houses on fire with water and white chalk—do you understand? Go!"

At this the secretary picked his way through the yard, carrying his head obliquely to avoid the rain that dashed directly in his face, and holding the gate for a moment, was followed by the superior functionary, in great state; who paused once or twice, however, and turned about to take a glance at the buildings under survey for insurance.

"Very well," said Puffer Hopkins, stepping out from under a shed where he had ambushed himself during this instructive conversation; "these gentlemen must be on the relief committee, they have a wonderful tenderness for poor people, and wouldn't see 'em made martyrs of by a conflagration, for all the world. Let me see; I think I'll visit the lightning-maker in the garret, first. He's a genius, no doubt, and, belonging to the melo-dramatic school, may dazzle two or three weak minds in the neighborhood."

With these words the young politician proceeded to the house which had been pointed out as the residence of the lightning-maker, and knocked gently at the door.

The summons was answered by a small girl, with an unclean face and eyes that twinkled through the dirt like a ground-mole's, who gave him to understand that the gentleman in question was at that moment in the garret of the building, busy upon a two-quarter, and that he, Puffer Hopkins, if he went up stairs, had better come upon him cautiously, lest he might, in the confusion of a sudden surprise, let slip a volcano, or something horrible of that nature in the combustible line.

Taking to heart the suggestion of the small adviser, Puffer walked up stairs, and knocked at the door of the artisan's laboratory with great discretion, beginning with a rap in the very lowest key, and ascending gradually to a clear double-knock.

"Hold a minute," cried a voice from within, "till I mix in a trifle of red and blue. If you

should come in now," continued the voice, pondering and speaking a word or two only at a time, as if it was interrupted by some manual operation, "you'd lose us three good rounds with the pit. They always loves to see a sheet of red fire, provided there's a cross of blue in it."

In a moment Puffer was admitted, and discovered a lean man bending over a mortar with great staring eyes and cheeks discolored with brimstone or yellow fumes of some other kind; and surrounded by black bottles, two or three broken pestles, an iron retort, and various other implements of his trade. Puffer introduced himself and proceeded at once to the exercise of his function as a scourer.

"This profession of yours," said Puffer—he dared not call it a trade, although the poor workman was up to his eyes in vile yellow paste and charcoal-dust—"this profession, sir, must give you many patriotic feelings of a high caste, sir."

"It does, sir," answered the lightning-maker, slightly mistaking his meaning; "I've told the manager more than fifty times that lightning such as mine is worth ninepence a bottle; but he never would pay more than fourpence-halfpenny, except in volcanoes—they's always two quarters."

"I mean, sir," continued the scourer, "that when you see the vivid fires blazing on Lake Erie—when Perry's working his ship about like a velocipede, and the guns are bursting off, and the enemy is paddling away like ducks—is not your soul then stirred, sir? Do you not feel impelled to achieve some great—some glorious act? What do you do—what can you do—in such a moment of intense, overwhelming excitement?"

"I generally," answered the lightning-maker, with an emphasis upon the personal pronoun, as if some difference of practice might possibly prevail, "I generally takes a glass of beer, with the froth on."

"But, sir, when you see the dwelling-house roof, kindled by your bomb-shells, all a-blaze with the midnight conflagration—the rafters melting away, I may say, with the intense heat, and the engines working their pumps in vain—don't you think then, sir, of some peaceful family, living in some secluded valley, broken in upon by the heartless incendiary with his demon matches, and burning down their cottage with all its out-houses?"

"In such cases," answered the lightning-maker, "I think of my two babies at home, with their poor lame mother; and I makes it a point, if my feelings is very much wrought up, as the prompter says, to run home between the acts to see that all's safe, and put a bucket of water by the hearth. Isn't that the thing?"

"I think it is; and I'm glad to hear you talk so feelingly," answered Puffer Hopkins; "our next mayor's a very domestic-minded man—just such a man as you are, only I don't believe he'd be so prudent and active about the bucket on the hearth."

At this the lightning-maker smiled pleasantly to himself, and unconsciously thrust a large roll of brimstone in his cheek.

"Is this your natural complexion that you have on this morning?" resumed Puffer Hopkins, seeing how well the personal compliment took, and glancing at the lightning-maker's yellow chaps. "If it is, the resemblance between yourself and the gentleman I have mentioned is more striking than I could have expected. His nose is a copper. Isn't yours inclining a little that way?"

"I believe it is," answered the journeyman lightning-maker, complacently.

"Your eye is a deep gray, I think, as far as I can see it by this light: that's what the Committee of Nomination, when they waited on the next mayor, thought was his."

In the flutter of nerves created by the scourer's instituting these pleasant comparisons, the lightning-maker unadvisedly brought together a couple of hostile combustibles, which occasioned the premature bursting of a small bottle of azure lightning, without scenery to match; and a small skylight was opened thereby through a decayed shingle in the roof. Instructed by this, of the tropical climate of the lightning-maker's garret, and thinking that a sufficient train had been laid for a future vote, Puffer—who had been advised of the residence of a stout cobbler in the neighboring attic—trotted up a ladder, and through the open scuttle, and scrambling over the pitched roof, plunged down a similar opening in the next house, and came very suddenly upon the object he sought. The burly shoemaker was seated on a cobbler's bench, working away merrily enough. At his side was laid a long clay pipe, filled ready to be lighted, and hard by him a bundle of chattels, corded up and arranged apparently for instant transportation.

"How is this?" cried the cobbler, as his eye caught the person of Puffer Hopkins; "this isn't fair—nor is it legal in any courts, whether of chancery or common law. Writs don't descend, sir—I know enough for that. No deputy-sheriff was ever enough of an angel to come from above. I resist process! Do you hear that?"

Saying this, the cobbler started up, and seizing his bench, planted it on end in front of the corded bale of chattels, and standing between the two, he glared fiercely through the circular broken seat of the bench on the suspected deputy.

A few words, however, calmed his agitation: he threw down his bench, resumed his seat, and, in token of his perfect satisfaction and pleasure in the explanation Puffer had given of the character in which he visited him, he kindled his pipe and smoked away in good, long, hearty puffs.

Growing communicative, as their intercourse continued, Puffer at length learned that the gentleman was the proprietor of the Dutch oven down stairs; the terror of Mr. Blinker, the

president; was greatly distressed by creditors, who hunted him with catchpoles and marshals from morning till night; that all his proprietary interest on the lower floors lay in the oven aforesaid, and a very comfortable little fat wife (whose pride and comfort consisted in a turkey browned before a slow fire), and other little necessities allowed by law. The corded bale held his valuables; and with these he was prepared to mount, at a moment's warning, through the scuttle, and to convey himself to the peak of the house, where he made it a point to sit in the shadow of a broad chimney and smoke his pipe at ease, until the cloud of pursuers was fairly dispersed or blown over.

"They shall never catch me while I live," cried the cobbler, energetically. "If they come on the roof, I'll climb down the lightning-rod with that bundle on my back. I can do it, and if one of the rascals attempts to climb up to me, I'll drop it, and break his neck off short—depend on that. My dear fellow, I'd be at the expense of the board, lodging, and education of a South American condor, and teach him to bear it off in his beak, before they should touch a thread of it. Now you know my mind!"

At this he struck a thick heel, on which he was at work, a thumping blow with his hammer, and kicked his lapstone across the whole breadth of the garret.

Puffer Hopkins of course applauded the spirit of the cobbler, and artlessly suggested that no man, with the soul of a man, would submit quietly to such impertinent intermeddling with his private affairs.

"However, my friend," he continued, scouring as industriously as he well knew how, "I trust this will not always be so. These gentlemen of the law may yet have their combs cut. I don't think they will always be allowed to crow and chanticlear it over honest men!"

"Why not?" asked the cobbler, looking at Puffer Hopkins anxiously, and planting his great hands upon his knees.

"For no very particular reason," answered the scourer, "except that I have heard it suggested that our new common council—mind, I say our new common council—will abolish the office of sheriff, and all others that interfere with the enjoyment of a man's property by himself. They'll do away with writs and executions, and all that sort of thing," said Puffer, coolly—"that's all!"

"Say you so?" shouted the cobbler, springing from his bench and seizing Puffer by the hand—"I'm your man! Now try your luck on the down-stairs people; don't let me keep you back a minute. Try the bereaved mother down stairs. Her husband's a wavering: have him by all means. Dogs! you've done me more good than the sight of the big boot in the square the first time I set eyes on it. God speed you! Luck to you!"

With these ejaculations, the cobbler dismissed his comforting visitor, who hurried below, and

opening, according to the instructions he had received, the first door to the right, arrived at a new field in the domain to be canvassed.

Taking a rapid and comprehensive survey, Puffer Hopkins was aware that he had entered the apartment of the bereaved mother; for there upon the mantel, in a glass case, dressed in crape, stood the identical wooden horse, with the riband about his neck that had been attached to the bed-post by the little misanthrope, on the day he had taken his own life in the cistern.

As he discovered this, a gloom suddenly came over the countenance of the scourer, and he approached the afflicted parent with an aspect as wo-begone and dolorous as the wood-cut frontispiece of the most melancholy mourner's companion ever printed.

"Mr. Hopkins, of the ward committee," said Puffer, advancing and taking the bereaved one by the hand. "The good man of the house is not in, I think?"

"No, he isn't, sir," she answered; "it's very little that he is in now, since the event—he can't bear the sight, poor man, of that grievous monument there"—pointing to the quadruped in the glass case—"always in his sight. It e'en a'most drives him mad."

Puffer Hopkins wondered—if the sight of a miserable caricature of a horse in wood, under a glass cover, was so near making a lunatic of him—why he didn't go mad at once, like a sensible man, and shiver it all in atoms, which would have done something toward making it invisible; but he didn't utter these thoughts, but, on the contrary, kept them hidden in the very darkest recess of his bosom.

"You do right, madam," continued Puffer, "to keep that constantly before your eyes. It's a softening object—a mellowing spectacle—for the heart to contemplate. Oh, no; there is nothing—there can be nothing"—pursued the scourer, in a voice choked with agony, and turning away as if he was too manly to expose his feelings, "like a mother's grief. A mother's grief—it is a sacred and a solemn thing; and when the affliction comes thus—in this ghastly shape—it's too much to think of. Who can repress their tears at the thought of the agony of this family, on the day of this fatal discovery? The father frantic with sorrow and exertions to get the body; sisters and brothers—how many have you, madam?"

"Five small ones—one at the breast."

"Five little ones, shouting for the departed angel; and his mother—his poor, bereaved, broken-hearted mother—when she thinks of the suit he had on, his nice, tidy, Sunday suit, bends over the cistern and drops in her tears till it overflows!—Oh, there's a picture for the moralist and the patriot!"

"Don't, sir, don't," cried the afflicted mother. "Don't—your eloquence quite breaks my heart; it makes me feel it all over again."

"I will not," said Puffer, "I'll resist my feelings, and say no more about it; not if you'll be

good enough to take this little order on the dry-goods dealer—just so that the poor boy, if he should ever be found, may be put in a decent shroud; he was a small boy, I think—the order's for a small boy, a very small boy; and oblige me by telling your husband that Puffer Hopkins, of the vigilance committee, called. Good day—good day—poor child!" Uttering these last words with a pathetic glance at the toy on the mantel, and heaving a profound sigh, the scourer closed the door.

With the door, he closed his labors for the day, and shaped his course homeward, satisfied that he had done his country some slight service, and that two or three minds, at least, had been sufficiently enlightened to vote the proper ticket at the next charter election.

## CHAPTER IX.

### AN ENTERTAINMENT AT MR. FISHBLATT'S.

A FEW mornings after his adventures as scourer, Puffer Hopkins was sitting at his desk in the Fork, earnestly engaged in the preparation and composition of a handbill, for the approaching election. That this was a sufficiently arduous undertaking for the young politician, was proved by the great multitude of model placards strewn about the floor, from which he at intervals solaced himself with a line or two; by the blank looks with which he at times entirely halted in his task; and by the painful gaze he occasionally directed toward the wall, as if he expected to discover there handwriting wherewith to eke out the unfinished sentence. Having a good eye for catching phrases, and considerable readiness in sounding words that would tell well in the popular ear, the composition presently flowed apace; line upon line lengthened out, Puffer reciting each aloud as it was finished, and in the course of about two hours, a thundering manifesto, doomed soon to echo back from wall, shutter, bulk-head, and house-side, great words of fearful import, and to set the whole world of meeting-hunters and politicians astir, was completed.

Puffer Hopkins was clearing his throat and preparing for a grand rehearsal of this masterpiece, when he was suddenly confronted by a frozy-headed small girl, who had got into the apartment, it seemed to him—for he had no notice of her entrance—by some underhand jugglery or legerdmain, and who, assuming a face of great mystery, levelled at him a diminutive billet, with a faint streak of gold about its edges, and his own name written elaborately on the back.

"Compliments—hopes as how you'll come—and wishes the bearer to say, wouldn't feel cheerful if Mr. Hopkins should fail;" said the frozy-haired girl reciting something that had been, evidently, ticketed and laid away in her mind, to be delivered when called for.

Three lines of writing and a date within, worked out, obviously, with painful toil and a great variety of pens, explained the object of the small visitor, in a request that "Mr. P. Hopkins would favor Mr. H. Fishblatt with company at seven o'clock this (Thursday) evening, at the sign of the brass-plate and chimneys, as before;" giving him at the same time street and number.

Puffer was in fine spirits, for he had been successful in his literary labors—and what author's heart is not a-glow when his invention proves ready, and his hand runs free across the page?—and he accepted the note with great complaisance, and bade the frouzy-haired messenger (who stood staring at the huge text scattered about the floor, as if the great black letters might be ogres, giants, or some other monsters) inform Mr. Fishblatt he would attend his summons with the utmost pleasure.

He was as good as his word; and two hours before the time named in the invitation, Puffer began to prepare for the party at Fishblatt's. First and foremost, he drew forth from a case, in the corner of his lodgings, a brass-buttoned, blue coat, of a popular cut, and fell to beating it over the shoulders and down the back with a yardstick, as if he had under his hand the body and person of his direst enemy in the world; then he twisted the right arm up and dashed at the place where the ribs might have been; then he fell upon the breasts and pummelled them horribly; and then, casting aside his stick, he fastened fiercely on the collar, and gave the whole a mighty shaking, as if he would have the very life out of it. A pair of light drab cloth pantaloons, dragged from the same confinement, shared in like manner at his hands; a striped vest was stretched on the back of a chair like a rack; then his boots were forced into a high polish, the pantaloons drawn on, the vest released, and the coat occupied by its legitimate lord, and Puffer, first attitude-nizing a little before the long glass, and running his fingers through his hair—to get his head as nearly as possible into the model he had in his eye of a great politician, whose portrait was in the gallery at the museum—was ready for the party. Sallying gently forth, and marching steadily through the streets, with a secret conviction that every eye in the metropolis was fixed immovably upon him, he shortly discovered the great brass plate of Halsey Fishblatt gleaming through the dark, where he knocked, waited for a minute in a state of awful suspense, and was admitted, as before, by the message-bearer, who came to the door with a face wrinkled with smiles, and strongly suggestive of something very nice and choice to be had within. The small girl asked Puffer to be good enough to go to the third-story back room, and thither he proceeded; encountering on his way, and at the base of the second flight of stairs, a fry of dolorous-looking gentlemen, who lingered about the parlor-door, pulling down their wristbands and contemplating it, as it opened

and shut, with as much dread as if it had been the gate of the doomed; while others hovered about the great balustrade of the staircase, in waiting for the descent of their lady partners from the third-story front room above. Every now and then an angelic creature, in a white gown and abundant pink ribands, came down this Jacob's ladder, and, fastening upon the arm of one of the sentinels, they marched into the parlor with great state. Returning from his toilet up stairs, Puffer Hopkins followed the general current, and discovered a scene the solemnity whereof was exceedingly impressive and disheartening.

The walls of the parlor upon which he had entered were lined all round with well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, sitting as erect as corpses, and gazing into the empty space in the middle of the apartment, as if some curious meteorological phenomenon were going on there, in which they all had a special interest. At the announcement of Puffer Hopkins by a pale young gentleman at the door, the corpses waked up a little, some twittered spasmodically, a few moved uneasily in their chairs, and by the time Puffer had attained a seat in the corner, the company had again subsided into its condition of tomb-like repose.

They were presently, however, again wakened—and with rather more success—by the entrance of the host, Mr. Fishblatt himself, bearing before him, firstly, a huge ruffle, which stood straight out from his bosom like a mainsail, and secondly, reposing in the shadow of the said ruffle, a black teaboard of proportionate dimensions, garnished with small jugs or tumblers of lemonade.

Mr. Fishblatt walked very erect and majestically, and holding the waiter at arms' length—smiling pleasantly, as a gentleman always does when he's engaged in a business he knows himself to be altogether too good for, but which the crisis of affairs requires him to look after—presented it to the ladies all around, beginning at the left hand, as he was bound to do, and skipping ever so many thirsty gentlemen who gloated on the small jugs; and then coming down toward the right hand, as he was likewise bound, he allowed the thirsty gentlemen to glean from the waiter the tumblers that remained. It is not to be supposed that Mr. Halsey Fishblatt all this time held his peace; on the contrary, the bearing of the waiter was not a tithe of his toils, for he kept strenuously urging, wherever he went, the propriety of taking a tumbler—the necessity of a draught of the lemonade to cool themselves, and particularly soliciting and entreating the ladies to make a paradise of his (Mr. Fishblatt's) parlors, by enjoying themselves with all their might and main.

The lemonade had scarcely vanished and the empty tumblers been gathered and borne out of sight, when it was announced—to the discomfort and confusion of the company—that the celebrated and distinguished representative of

the thirteenth ward in the city councils—Alderman Punchwind, by name—was in the house—having, as it was understood, done Mr. Fishblatt the honor to call in and partake of the agreeable hospitalities that were then and there going forward. Mr. Fishblatt, at the thought of so august a presence, recoiled a little, but recovering speedily, a deputation was immediately sent out, consisting of Puffer Hopkins and two young gentlemen who wore large watch-seals and were rather ambitious of office and employment of this kind, to wait upon his eminence. In a few minutes a heavy tread was heard upon the stair, a commotion in the entry, and in stalked, in a broad-brimmed hat, a portly, capacious, and solid gentleman, of such dimensions as to resemble not a little a great school-globe, stepped out of its brass ring, and taking a walk of pleasure. In he marched, accompanied by his delegation, who clung close to his skirts to watch the impression his presence might make on the commonality assembled.

Puffer Hopkins had a glimmering reminiscence of a broad-brimmed hat, very much like the alderman's, escaping into a pantry at the end of the hall as he came in at the beginning of the evening, worn by Crump—could it be so?—Crump, the meek secretary who had been so browbeaten in the shower by Mr. Blinker. His brows overshadowed by the huge hat, and his chin buried in a capacious collar, Alderman Punchwind paused for a minute at the door, glanced about slowly and with an air of solemn importance, and then, without removing his hat or uttering a word, stalked across the parlor, proceeded to fill a glass from the sideboard, where relays of refreshment in liberal quantities were arranged, and at this moment, deigning to turn around and recognise the company, he intimated by a look that he would drink all their good healths; which he did, very emphatically absorbing his wine much as the Norwegian Maelstrom might if it were a corporate alderman and fed at the public charge. Having disposed of the wine, the alderman next devoted his attention to the cake and other eatables, of which great batches disappeared from time to time; with a pause now and then, to allow him to vary the entertainment with a friendly return, just to show he hadn't forgotten it, to the decanter; which proceedings were watched with painful interest by Mr. Fishblatt's guests—who were horrified at the miraculous disappearance of the provision for the party, and who looked upon the performance much as they would at the elephant at the menagerie, feeding with a bale or two of hay, or the pagan anaconda at the museum, lunching on a pair of fowls and a live rabbit, without so much as a grace to the meal.

As soon as Alderman Punchwind had concluded his corporate banquet by stripping the board of something more than two thirds of its contents, solid and liquid, he wiped his lips, and marching steadily toward the centre of the rooms, there planted himself by the side of a

column and looked abroad upon the company, fixing his eye, now and then, with peculiar sternness, on some young lady who happened to be fairer than her neighbors.

After he had enjoyed this recreation for some time, various members of the company were brought up by Mr. Fishblatt and introduced (by consent) to the distinguished functionary, who kept his ground manfully and received them all with an air of bland and gracious condescension; allowing each of them to take him by the hand and to enjoy a few minutes' contemplation of his very classic and expressive features, and then pass off, making room for others.

While this was proceeding, attention was drawn toward the door, by the entrance of a very uppish gentleman of a severe aspect, who carried himself with great state and port, and cast his eyes disdainfully about, as if he held the individuals of both sexes and all ages there assembled supremely cheap and of no account whatever in making up anything like an accurate scale of society.

This disdainful and evidently select personage was no other than John Blinker, Esq., first director and president of the Phoenix Fire Company below stairs, who, as soon as he had heard there was a live alderman in the room, came forward extending his hand and smiling pleasantly, quite anxious, it would seem, to conciliate the favor of a mighty alderman and common council-man. These overtures on the part of Mr. Blinker were received by the alderman, however, with an air of slight disdain, which caused the president to cower and fall back a little until Mr. Punchwind thought proper to relax his features, when the president advanced again, and had the satisfaction at last, and after many difficulties, of taking him by the hand.

"Do I understand that the fire-limits of the city are to be extended?" asked Mr. Blinker, whose mind hovered about the fiery principle of his calling like a moth about a flame, after waiting in vain for a communication from the alderman.

The question was asked, but not answered; for Alderman Punchwind, reclining his head a little toward his questioner, allowed a smile to spread over his features—as much as to say, you don't know how important, how critical, and how solemn a question you have put to me—and said not a word.

"I think it would be an advantage to the city to have them extended, sir. I hope I am not so unfortunate as to differ in opinion with Alderman Punchwind!" said Mr. Blinker meekly.

The alderman only smiled again, intimating thereby, apparently, that there were state reasons why this anxious interrogatory of the great president's couldn't be answered just then.

At this moment, Puffer Hopkins, who had overheard the questions of Mr. Blinker, and entertaining a becoming reverence for the distinguished individual before him—feeling, too,

perhaps, that a modicum of metropolitan information from the very fountain head, on a subject in which he felt an interest, from his frequent professional pilgrimages to political meetings, lectures, and other night-resorts, might be serviceable—impelled by some, or all of these considerations, Puffer proceeded to ask, in a tone of profound respect, "Whether they were to have new windows in the public lamps?"

"New lamp-windows did you ask?" retorted the alderman, as plainly as he could without the trouble of opening his lips.

"I did, sir," reiterated Puffer Hopkins, beginning to feel rhetorically inclined, and so understanding the learned gentlemen, "and knowing the interest felt in the answer, and your ability to give us a clear and decisive reply, I put it to you in this public manner; whether we are to have new glasses in the public lamps! A gust of wind in our streets of a dark night is equal to an eclipse of the sun in broad day, in their present dilapidated condition. The darkness of Egypt overspreads this city, sir, at times; a Siberian darkness where bears and catamounts might dwell, perhaps, if it were not for the city police and our vigilant magistracy."

The alderman paused and looked about him with a grave and majestic air. He seemed reluctant to respond.

"It's your duty, sir," said Mr. Fishblatt, coming in at this crisis, standing directly in front of the alderman, and looking him steadily in the face, "to inform us of your views on this all-important subject. The happiness of this community is dependent on it, sir. There'll be an immense oversetting of hacks, breakage of legs, and fracture of skulls, if things remain in their present condition, I can tell you. This metropolis is as black now, sir, at night, as the bottom of an ink-bottle, and people float about the streets at random, like so many bugs on the surface of a dark pool. What's all the crime of this great city owing to, sir? Some will say its intemperance and a neglect of the public pumps. Others will say it's ignorance, and neglect of the public schools. Some will tell you it's because we've got too many penitentiaries and houses of refuge, and others will tell you it's because they're too few. Pumps, penitentiaries, and public schools, can't explain it; it's your miserable public lamps, sir! It's your knavish oil-men, and your rascally glaziers, that are corrupting us every day and every night—more particularly at night. They're the origin of your dissolute sons, your profligate daughters, your sinful judges, and your dishonest clerks. Nobody comes out at noon and makes a beast of himself in the street. Keep the city well lighted and you keep it virtuous, sir. You should have a lamp at the front of every tenement, and where the streets are so narrow that the houses might catch from the wick, you should have men moving up and down with great lanterns, and keep all the thoroughfares and alleys in a glow. You wouldn't have a

murder once in a century, and as for burglaries and larcenies, they'd be forgotten crimes, like the Phoenix, sir, and the Megalosaurus!"

At the termination of this earnest appeal the company had gathered in a body about the person of the alderman, and stood waiting, with intense interest for his answer. Alderman Punchwind, hereupon, canvassed the assemblage with great deliberation, and, having finished, elevated the fore-finger of his right hand and passed it significantly down his nose, despatched a sagacious wink toward Mr. Blinker with his sinister eye, and mildly muttering "Smoked beans," departed.

Can it create surprise to know that the company there assembled by invitation of Mr. Fishblatt, were astounded at this strange and unseemly exit of the distinguished gentleman from the thirteenth ward? that Mr. Fishblatt was horrified and stricken with amaze? that Mr. Blinker was indignant? that the delegation that had waited upon the alderman felt slightly humiliated and abashed at the conduct of their superior? That Puffer Hopkins was profoundly penetrated with a sense of the uncertainty of human affairs—for had there not been here an individual occupying, but a minute before, the highest conceivable pinnacle, the very Himalayah-top of human greatness attainable at a small party—and hadn't that individual, with most suicidal rashness, pitched himself off headlong into the very centre of a low vulgar kitchen-garden, by an allusion to fumigated beans?

The entertainment was now, in truth, at an end; and although fragments of cake and fag-ends of decanters, generously left by Alderman Punchwind, were from time to time brought forward, the spirits of the party flagged. Mr. Fishblatt hung his head; and when, at a few minutes of midnight, the insurance president disappeared, the party gradually broke up; two or three, at first, leaving at a time, and then a shoal of half a dozen, and in less than an hour the rooms were deserted.

Puffer Hopkins, who had gallantly assumed the charge of a young lady with a pair of piercing black eyes, who lived in a remote suburb with which Puffer was by no means familiar, spent the remainder of the night, up to three o'clock, in piloting the young lady homeward, and the balance, till dawn, in discovering his way back again through divers crooks and crosses, through streets that ran at first directly for half a mile into town, and then directly for half a mile more out again; getting now and then into a road that had no outlet, and then into one that had an outlet that led into nothing.

The mysterious proceedings of Alderman Punchwind, it should be stated, remain to this day unexplained. On inquiry a few days after the entertainment, Mr. Fishblatt was assured that on the night in question, Alderman Punchwind, the authentic and accredited representative of the thirteenth ward, was in his own room laboriously employed on a report of fifty-



three pages foolscap, on the subject of spiles and pier-heads, and hadn't left it for a moment, except to step over the way to his neighbor the timber-merchant, to get a few facts to put in his report. It therefore only remained for rumor to say that this was the apparition of the alderman; which was confirmed with the superstitious by Mr. Punchwind's being carried off just seven days afterward by an apoplexy, at one of the city suppers. Others thought it might have been all a dream and delusion on the part of the company, who may be reasonably supposed to have been at the time under the influence of Mr. Fishblatt's good cheer: and others again—and certain mysterious smiles on the part of the frouzy-haired servant girl hinted as much—would not be beaten from the belief that it was Crump; Crump, the humble secretary of the Phoenix Fire Company, himself; who had adopted this method, it was suggested, of enjoying one first-rate banquet which his own salary didn't admit of, and at the same time of retaliating the severities of his superior; having the entire pleasure of both amusements, the feast and the revenge, to himself, which was very characteristic.

For ourselves we rather incline to this last solution, inasmuch as the subject of Mr. Fishblatt's party was, from the time of the starting of this hypothesis, a forbidden subject thenceforth and for ever in the office of the Phoenix Company, by express order of Mr. Blinker, who said it was altogether too frivolous to think of.

## CHAPTER X.

### HOBBLESHANK AT HIS LODGINGS.

THE interest with which Mr. Fyler Close watched the flight of Hobbleshank was by no means diminished, when he discovered faring forth from behind a stable-door, where he had lain in ambush, and keeping, at an easy distance, diligently in the track of the wrathful old gentleman, no other than Ishmael Small. Speeding along in a very eccentric route, sometimes on the pavement, again in the middle of the road, and then, with one foot on the kerb and one in the gutter, Hobbleshank made his way through the straitened purlieu of Pell street—Pell street that lies just off the great thoroughfare of the Bowery with a world of its own, where great mackerel-venders' trumpets, nearly as long as the street itself, are blown all day long; where vegetable-wagons choke the way and keep up a reek of greens and pot-herbs until high noon, and where, if all the signs and omens that pervade the street—sights, sounds, and smells—are of any worth, the denizens lead a retired life, with a lenten diet, ignorant of what the great world beyond may think of beefless dinners or breakfasts after Pythagoras.

Through this choice precinct they sped, Hobbleshank pushing swiftly on, and his pursuer following at a distance with equal pace, darting in at entry-doors and out again in a glance, to avoid discovery, if the old man should look back; and so they soon entered the mouth of Doyer street—the Corkscrew lane—through which it needs skilful pilotage to bear one safely, every house a turn, and every kerbstone set at a different angle, for thus, like a many-jointed snake, Doyer street creeps out of the damp and green-grown marsh of Pell street, upon the open, sunny slope of Chatham square.

Following the whim of the street, which must needs have its way, they got forth into the broad region of the square along which Hobbleshank speeded at a good round rate, while Mr. Small regaled himself with an eleemosynary ride on the foot-board of a hackney-coach, where he sat comfortably balanced and keeping the old man in view until they reached Mulberry street, when he dismounted—just in time to evade the crack of a whip from the box-seat—and followed Hobbleshank warily into a building some dozen or two paces off of the main street. It was a dark, ruinous, gloomy-looking old house,—built on a model that was lost twenty years ago and never found again—and had a wide, greedy hall, that swallowed up as many chairs, tables, and other fixtures, as the various tenants chose to cast into it.

Up the broad, rambling stairs Hobbleshank ascended, and by the time he had attained a cramped room at the head of the second flight, Mr. Small had accomplished the same journey, crept along and clambered up a narrow cornice in the throat of the hall, and gaining, by an exercise of dexterity peculiar to himself, a small window in the wall, was looking very calmly and reflectively through the same at two aged women upon whose presence Hobbleshank had entered.

One of them sat by the hearth; she was small and shrivelled, with a pinched and wrinkled countenance—so shrivelled and thin, and seemingly void of life-like qualities, as if she hovered only on the borders of the world, and was ready to go at any moment's summons. The other was stouter, though she too was wrinkled with years and bore in her features the traces of many past cares, which she seemed zealous to make known by larding her discourse with great sighs, which she heaved at the rate of twenty a minute, while she bustled about the chamber and busied herself in various household offices.

These scarcely noticed the entrance of Hobbleshank, who opened the door gently, and, stealing in, proceeded to a corner of the room, where, taking a chair and turning his back upon them, he bowed his head upon his hand and was silent.

"I tell you—you have been a blessed woman, Dorothy—that you have," cried the elder, in a sharp, wiry voice from the chimney-corner, where she was painfully employed in rubbing

her withered palms together over the blaze, "a blessed woman. There was my firstborn, Tom, with as handsome a pair of blue eyes as mother ever looked at, didn't he fall into the old brewery well, and die there, like a malt-rat, shouting for help, which came, of course, just the minute after he was stifled. Always so—always so, I tell you!"

"Whose roof was blown off in the great September gale—yours or mine, Aunt Gatty? I'd like to know that," rejoined the other, heaving a sigh of course. "Whose son was buried in a trance for three days and better, and when he comes to again has to be taught his alphabet all over like a suckling child? Your loss—Lord preserve us!—was a drop in the bucket, so speaking, when the brewers wound it up—nothing more."

And the stout old lady laughed gently at the thought of the brawny brewers tugging away at the rope for so lively a hoist, and then fell straightway to sighing.

"Why, you talk like a simpleton," answered the other, sharply, "a natural simpleton in a dotage; there was a child of mine, Dorothy, you mind it well—you used to say he had hawk's eyes—so wild and bright and glancing. That boy went mad, I think, and struck at me—me, his mother—and that you know, too, for many's the look you've taken at the old scare-me, who had watched his steps all through infancy and childhood and boyhood, up to the very manhood that gave him strength to strike; smote her down to the earth—was it he or the fiend that did it?—and would have snatched her life away, but for the men who beat him off like a dog. There was Joe, too, my dear," continued Aunt Gatty, "that went down of a dark, drearish night, in the wild Gulf stream, crying Heaven's help! in vain, and snatching at the waves, as Old Buncle, the shipmaster, told me, like a madman." The old woman shook as in a palsy, and waved her head painfully to and fro, as she recited these passages of past trouble.

"True, true, true," said her companion, who had paused in her labor and watched her for a moment, "true, just as true as that Jacob—my Jacob, I used to call him, but now he's anybody's or nobody's—was carried off to prison by cruel men, ten times fiercer than your Gulf streams and your tornadoes—had his limbs chained, and was put to hewing great blocks of stone like a devil on penance—taken away from good day wages and bound in a jail—"

"Peace! you foolish women!" exclaimed Hobbleshank, starting up at this moment from the deep silence in which he had been buried, turning toward them and lifting both his arms tremblingly up, "I can read you a page, a black page out of the book of lamentations—that should make the blood creep in your old veins like the brook-ripples in December. There's a quiet, serene farm-house—a quiet, serene farm-house—with a father, a mother, yes, merciful God! a young, happy, beautiful mother." He

paused and bowed his head, but in a few minutes he proceeded, "and a young child that has just crept out upon the bleak common of this world of ours, lying in her bosom, as it might be Adam and his spouse, in some chosen corner of their old garden. Some devil or other secretly ingulfs all the fortune of that household, tortures with a slow, killing pain, the father of the family, by ever lending to him and ever driving him for horrid interest—making him toil and moil in that great inexorable mill of usury and borrowing till his brain turns—his old reason totters like a weak tower that shakes in the wind. He flies from his home, wandering to and fro, he knows not whither—straying back to it at times, after long lunatic absences; and one day—there's a word that should prick your foolish old hearts like a sword's point—coming suddenly back, he finds his fair young wife dead!—yes, dead! starved into a skeleton so pale and ghastly, that anatomists and men of death would smile to look on it—and the boy, the boy that should have gone with her, she loved him so, into the grave she had travelled to through hunger, or have stayed back to inherit that roof that was his and cheer up this sad old heart that is mine—snatched away, secretly, nobody could tell how, or when, or whither—and the very nurse that should have tarried to keep company with death in that house of sorrow—was likewise fled; and I, an old, shattered, uncertain, poor creature, left alone in the midst of all this desolation—as if it became me—and had only waited for me as its rightful master and emperor. Well, God's blessing with you—and if you have seen greater trouble than that, you have borne it merrily and are miracles of old women to have lived through it to this day!"

Saying this, the old man started up from his chair, and staggering across the room, trembling in every limb, he hurried into a small chamber at the end of the apartment and cast himself upon his couch. The two old women, abashed by the passion and energy of the speaker, were silent for a while and moved not a limb. They both sat looking toward the door where Hobbleshank had entered, as if they expected him momentarily to emerge.

"A sad tale; a sad tale, in truth;" at length said the younger. "Was the boy never heard of?"

"Never, that I know, from that dark day to this," answered the other mumbling as she spake and shrinking back into the chimney, as if what she recalled stood shrouded before her in a deadly form; "search was not made for him until years after the mother's death; the worms' banquet had been set and cleared away many a day, when the old man who had wandered away as soon as the funeral was over, the Lord knows whither, came back and loitered and lingered about his former residence, the old farm-house in the suburbs of the city, day after day, watching in vain, hour by hour, for the forthcoming of some one who could tell the his-



tory of what was past. The building is closed and deserted, and has no historian but itself, or such as would not tell, if they could, the fate of the lost child, or the secret of his death if dead he be."

"And where is the nurse?"

"Absent, missing, drowned, or murdered, or dead in due course of nature; nobody can tell. The house is deserted and gone to decay and is said to belong to a wretched miser, whose right came, somehow or other, through the child's death. There's the whole story, and this old man who came to live with me so long ago—even before you knew me—and has never once spoken of it till this night, is the only wreck of the troubles, and cares, and crosses, that howled about it till they found entrance twenty years ago. Something has stirred him strangely or he would not have spoken this night."

"Perhaps his mind is failing," said the other, "for when that's ebbing away it always uncovers what is at the bottom, and brings to light things hidden in its depths for years."

"He may have seen some object associated with old times that has touched him," answered Aunt Gatty, "visited, perhaps, the farm-house itself; or have chanced upon some person connected with these terrible events."

"It may be so. But let us to bed, my dear old friend, and pray that the Spirit of Peace be in the old man's slumbers."

"Amen!" said her companion; and, extinguishing their light, and carefully drawing a curtain before the chamber-window where Hobbleshank lodged, that the morning beam might not disturb his repose, they were soon sheltered in the quiet and darkness of night that wrapped them all about.

Ishmael Small, who had greedily watched them all through, after stretching his blank features forward into the gloom of the apartment to catch any further word that might chance to fall, crept down from his post of observation and stole cautiously away.

## CHAPTER XI.

MR. LEYCRAFT RAMBLES PLEASANTLY ABOUT.

By the time Ishmael Small had returned to the street darkness had set in, and was growing along all the thoroughfares into the wide-bodied mantle worn by so many stragglers and evil-minded persons, and supposed to be a commodious cloak for all sorts of villanies and misdemeanors. As Ishmael came into the open way, his eye fell upon a tall, gaunt figure, that kept before him, not altogether in a straight line, but winding about through the crowd of laborers and 'prentices that began to set up Chatham street at this hour, in a strong current; not halting at any time, exactly, but pausing every now and then in its progress, and glancing about into the faces of those it en-

countered. Mr. Small observed that the tall figure occupied itself exclusively in gazing into men's faces, and into none of these save such as seemed to be in the early prime of life. The figure would look about and contemplate a face in this way for a moment, and then disengaging itself from the crowd, as if thwarted in its purpose, would hurry forward, until it plunged again into another, and renewed the never-ending scrutiny.

On the traces of this personage Ishmael hung, until they reached Doyer street, and into this crooked by-way it hastened, first casting a swift glance back upon the throng that speeded by, and Ishmael Small followed.

The tall figure glided stealthily along close up by the house-walls, and peered in wherever he could at the casements, coming at times to a dead pause, putting his face against the window and looking long and painfully within, as if he were bound to have an inventory of every article in the apartment.

In this way he toiled through the street, until he had reached its farthest extremity, where he crossed, entered a covered stable-way, and took up his station against the wall, his eyes still gleaming restlessly about, and his body bent forward into the partial darkness to catch sight of any face that chanced to pass.

"Evening, Emp'r'r," said Ishmael Small, crossing over at this juncture, and approaching him—lifting his cap at the same time with an air of profound respect—"taking the census, eh?"

"I wish I was," said the other, sternly, plucking his hat over his brow, "I'd have a chance then of learning whether he lives among men yet."

"You have the queerest fancy for faces I ever did see, Mr. Leycraft," said Ishmael, turning his own delightful countenance comically up toward Leycraft's, "the very funniest taste for juvenile noses that was ever heard of. Nothing'll serve you but a first-swath mug, about twenty-three year old, with a small blackberry mole under the left eye. Is that it?"

"That describes the child that was put foully out of the way," answered Leycraft, "so long ago, that it seems as if all had passed in another world, and yet as fresh, by Heaven, as if it belonged to yesterday."

"There's a plenty of boys in this street," answered Ishmael, "and in the next, and the next to that, thad 'ud answer, Emp'r'r; you can have your pick, perhaps you won't get the black-berry under the eye, but then you can get lots of hair-lips and boar-teeth, burnt faces and scald heads, and what do you say to a lad with a portmantle on his shoulders, like Ishmael Small, for example?"

"Do you think Fyler Close has any clew to the boy, dead or alive?" asked Leycraft, paying no heed to the suggestion of Ishmael.

"Lord! He know anything of the scape-grace," exclaimed Mr. Small, turning about so that the light of a stable lamp that hung above

them should fall directly on his blank visage, "bless you, Mr. Leycraft, he's ignorant as the Mogul—the great grand Eastern Mogul, that takes tea with the moon. He knows nothing, nor cares nothing!"

Mr. Leycraft grasped the seat with both hands, and bending down, looked sternly into the countenance of his companion, but discovering there nothing to the purpose, soon returned to his former position, and standing almost bolt upright, gazed straight forward, as if he would pierce the utmost limits of the darkness with his glance.

"I'd give my soul if the boy were alive!" he at length exclaimed with startling energy, reining in his breath as he spake, and discharging each word with the force of a missile; "alive! Ragged though he might be, maimed, blind, in prison, the commonest vagabond, or vilest felon that stalks a prison-hall; yea, though he stood before me now and with his raised hand should strike me to the earth, I'd leap up to greet him, and would bid him welcome back to God's light, readier than his mother's lips hailed his first coming into life!"

"Why don't you go to bed and sleep off this nonsense?" inquired Mr. Small; "the youth's abed somewhere or other, I'll warrant; if not in a four-poster, may be in a church-yard crib. Sleep's the physic for your excellency."

"Curse it! I can't sleep," rejoined Leycraft, "I have put myself on board sloops and dirty coal-smacks, and toiled away at the ropes till my palms were blistered; have let myself to carry logs and great iron sticks of timber, by the day, and yet, when night came—night that's nothing but a hideous dream to men like me—I've laid down and shut my eyes, and just as slumber began to come pleasantly upon me, a hand, a small hand seemingly, but as strong as a giant's would be laid on my arm, would shake me, and rousing, I beheld that accursed child's eyes looking steadily in mine, broad awake and glittering, but not half so cheerful as broad day; and then shaking his head mournfully, for a minute or two, it would move away, leaving me gasping and struggling for breath on the hard couch, like a drowning man. Blast my face, I'm but a dead-alive after all; pleasant company this, every night, but a little too much of it!"

While Leycraft ejaculated this passage in an under-breath, Mr. Small stood aside and grinned cheerfully, as if at an imaginary spectacle of a very pleasant nature, which might be going on at a short distance before him; at one minute he leaned forward with an ideal opera-glass at his eye; then he clapped his hands gently, as if the sport were well-conducted, and then he fell back, as against a comfortable support, and laughed as if it were too much for him. All this he did as if entirely unconscious of the presence of Mr. Leycraft or any one whatever.

"Blast you!" cried Leycraft, fixing his eye sharply upon Ishmael, "You don't make a mock of me, do you, young radish-legs? eh!"

"Lord bless your excellency!" rejoined Mr. Small, winking, as by surprise, from an agreeable reverie, "you can't seriously mean such a thing. I was thinking just then of a combat I had seed once at the thea-ter betwixt a fine speckled India tiger, and a little pock-marked man in a military jacket. The brute-beast was too much for him I guess," continued Ishmael, smiling pleasantly directly in Mr. Leycraft's face; "the way he got the fangs first here and then there, now in the head, now in the bosom, was very agreeable to a young operative surgeon what was aside o' me in the pit, very agreeable I can assure you."

"In God's name, Ishmael," said Leycraft, his mood changing abruptly from that of extreme fierceness to one of earnest entreaty, "Tell me what you know of this matter! If the child be dead, let me go and gather up his bones and give them decent burial at least!"

"Suppose the lad died where you think he did, Emp'ror," said Ishmael, evading a direct answer, "it was a natural death without drugs or doctors, that's a comfort I'm sure."

"A natural death, do you call it!" cried Leycraft, "the death of a pilfering weasel or a foul mud-rat rather. There's a plenty of nature in great black woods that swarm with bats and hideous birds of darkness, where no step comes but that of villains fled from city justice, and where the earth is dank with slime and sluggish ooze. A cradle and a calm pillow, with a face or two to look in upon it when one dies, is rather nearer the mark!"

"And it's a very pleasant subject to talk of too," said Ishmael. "There's no place like a open stable-way for an agreeable interview, unless it's in the jail entry. 'Mr. Leycraft's case is a very bad one,' says the keeper with his twist in his mouth. 'Not so bad, after all,' says the keeper's man, knocking the bunch o' keys agin his leg. 'It was only a juvenile boy.'"

"Blast you again!" exclaimed Leycraft, seizing Ishmael this time by the collar, and holding him in a hard gripe, "do you mock me for journey-work I've done for that old devil," pointing toward the lodgings of Mr. Fyler Close, "do you tell me I may come to hang for the job! There'll be three pairs on the tree my brave fellow, the day John Leycraft swings; three ripe villains and you'll be the youngest, and that old chap who begins to smell over-ripe, shall have the middle place, out of respect to his talents!"

Ishmael again protested that he was friendly, and that he was only striving with his little wit to help Mr. Leycraft realize a pleasant scene that he might one day come to be a party to; to which explanation Mr. Leycraft would, however, by no means hearken, but dragging Ishmael forth by the collar into the street, he pushed him from him with great vehemence, and while Mr. Small reeled off laughing to himself as he staggered, Leycraft turned his back upon him and hastened away.

At first he hurried forward with his head

down and his hands clenched like one bound on a task that must be performed, but presently, as he got into the throng of a thoroughfare, another purpose seemed to enter his mind, and raising his eyes suddenly he began to peer about like one awakened from a dream. Then he watched every face that passed him; sometimes singled out one from all others, and followed it for a while until it crossed a light, and then he fell back as if he had made a fatal mistake; and then taking up another, and another, and another, he renewed the pursuit, and again fell off into a state of blank despair. At times, too, he would strike from the crowd into by-streets, lone and deserted, where no soul was to be seen, and walking here for awhile, cast his thoughts back upon what had passed—would to God there were no such past time—years and years ago.

"I remember well," he said to himself in one of these pauses "how the old devil brought the work about; 'Leycraft,' said he, with a very pleasant and cheerful smile on his countenance, 'there's a sweet child, it's young, quite young, that's never been in that piece of woodland,' pointing to the hemlocks to the north-west, 'in its life, near as it is. Now it's quite a warm evening and the wood will be much cooler than the close room; the mother's dying within there—she can't last above a couple of hours—not beyond day-break at the best, and I'm quite curious, as she must go to heaven, for she's a delightful woman as ever was made, I'm quite curious to see which'll get there first, the mother postmarked by the doctors, or the young lad franked by the night air. It's a very curious little problem, isn't it?' I of course, fool, double-woven, three-ply ass that I was—answered to his wish, and when night fell, having the very sighs and moans of the poor dying lady in my ear, bore the child away. An apoplexy the first step I had taken would have been Heaven's blessing on the job."

At that moment a sick man was borne by in a curtained litter. Leycraft heard a groan, as of severe suffering and anguish from within; and this goaded his restless and uncomfortable thoughts anew.

"He, the generous, noble-hearted gentleman that he is, allowed me a lodging in the garret as long as I chose," said he, or rather, recited to himself, as he formed the thought in his own mind—"I might as well have lodged in the oven of eternal flame; the whole house cried out, from peak to foundation, against the deed I had done. The first night—good Heaven—can I ever forget it?—I slept well for a few hours, the agony of doing the crime had exhausted me; but when I awoke, it was from a dreadful, dreary fantasm, made up of howling crowds in pursuit, dark, chill woods, and a whole army, it seemed, of innocent children, surrounding and pleading with me, or cursing, I don't know which. Before me—in a gloomy corner of the garret—I saw, where the moon-beam fell upon it through a rent in the roof

and dressed it in ghastly light, the very child I had slain. It stood like a spectre, stiff, cold, threatening and rebuking me with its snake's eyes and visage of churchyard-marble. At first I was smitten aghast—but soon the devil stirred within me, and, rushing from my bed, I seized upon an old revolutionary sword—one that had been dyed long ago in a black Hessian's blood, and stood at the bed-head—and advancing upon the apparition, struck at it. It moved not; I struck again and again—it was still dumb. In this way I wrestled with it, grasping my sword fast with a death-hold, all night, at least, till I fell down where I had fought, like one in a swoon. When morning dawned I turned my eyes fearfully toward the quarter of my adversary, and then discovered that I had been battling all night long with nothing but the picture of a little old man—in all seeming an ancestor of the murdered child—and that I had pierced it at a hundred points. A hideous night—God, thanks be to him, sends few such to men!"

Whenever his thoughts ceased to toil with visions like these, he renewed his inquisition among the crowds through which he was passing, or which he hurried on to meet. In this way he struggled with himself or speeded forward the better part of the night. Toward day, when one might have supposed he would have sought home and rest, wriggling his way through lanes and crooked streets that plunged down into the heart of the city, he entered an alley of tenpin-players, and casting aside his coat without a word, joined a grim-looking man who had amused himself with tossing the balls, one over the other, against flies upon the ceiling, till Leycraft came in. They rolled away for hours; bowling at the pins as if they had been men, and knocking six at least in head at each stroke.

## CHAPTER XII.

### A FURTHER ACQUAINTANCE WITH FOB, THE TAILOR.

It was in the peak of the Fork, even higher up than Puffer Hopkins, that Fob, the tailor, lodged, and there Puffer, ascending by ladder-steps, one pleasant morning about this time, found him nestling, like a barn-swallow, under the eaves, with his legs gathered under him, after the immemorial fashion of the craft.

The room which was occupied by Fob, was scarcely more than an angle in the roof; the ceiling was formed by the slope of the housetop, and it was lighted by a small dormer window which bulged out of the roof like an eye, and, being the only dormer in the neighborhood, stared boldly down into the yards and alleys adjacent. It enjoyed the further privilege, from its great elevation, of peering off beyond the river, into a pleasant country prospect in the

suburbs of Williamsburgh, and furnished many cheerful rural images to any one that looked forth. Besides this paramount advantage of the dormer, there was within the apartment a pair of glass bottles on a small mantel, garnished with sprigs of asparagus stuck in at the top; a chain of birds'-eggs hung against the wall over the shelf; an old-fashioned clothes-press, very much broken up and debilitated, at the foot of a dwarf truckle-bed; parts of old spinning-wheels, rusty stirrups and sur-cingles, the back of a mouldy and moth-eaten saddle, and other ancient trumpery in a corner, and suspended at the window, overlooking a pot of plants, a cage with a blackbird in it, busily engaged in passing up and down from a second-story perch to the ground-floor of his tenement.

Although Puffer had many times before visited the lodgings of the little tailor, he had not failed each time to express, by his manner at least, a degree of surprise and bewilderment at the peculiar appointments and furniture of the apartment. To come up out of the noisy and brawling street, where everything was so harsh and city-like, into a little region where everything was quietly contrived to call up remote places, with the thought of a life so different, so simple, and pastoral, compared with the dull tumult below, was like magic, or play-house jugglery; and such a feeling betrayed itself in the countenance of Puffer Hopkins.

"You wonder, I doubt not, to see this blackbird here—don't you?" said the tailor, detecting the question which Puffer's looks had often asked before; "what business have I with a blackbird, unless I might fancy that I could catch the cut of a parson's coat from the fashion of his deep sable feathers. That blackbird, sir, is to me and my opinions, what the best and portliest member of Congress is to the mind of this metropolis. He has come a great way out of the country, from the very fields where I was born, and where my childhood frolicked, to remind me of the happy hours I have passed and the sweet dreams I have dreamt, in the very meadows where he and his brethren chattered on the dry branches of the chestnut-tree. He stands to me for those fields and all those hours and occasions of the past. I am a fool for being so easily purchased to pleasure, and so I am!"

Puffer had indicated by the attentive ear and glistening eyes with which he had regarded his poor neighbor, that, although a politician and a crowd-hunter, he had yet something in his heart that answered these conceits of the fancy-stricken tailor.

"This pot, too, of worthless flowers," continued Fob, "my neighbors, every morning and evening, see me water them, and wonder how I can so waste my time. They see in it nothing but a few coarse weeds in a cheap earthen pot. I, and thank God for it, recognise in it the great green wood, where summer and I haunted when we were young together. I hear in every breath that stirs them, the rust-

ling of the noonday-wind, as it spake to me long ago, in a quiet nook of the old ancestral wood-side; and the pattering of the rain on their leaves renews the sound of that ancient brook, whose voice was like a prophet's, to cheer and encourage all that green region in its growth. From its banks these flowers were plucked and brought into this heart of humanity, to give me a thought at times of the good childhood that was buried by me long ago where they had their birth."

Puffer still listened and said not a word.

"Oh, how many delicious discoveries in the tall grass; how many stealthy approaches; how many swayings in perilous branches, and mad antics in tree-tops; how many boisterous pursuits of the young bird and lucky arrests of winged fugitives, resound and come back and repeat themselves in this speckled string of birds' eggs hanging against the dingy wall!"

As he spake, the large black eyes of the tailor grew more lustrous, and still the more from the tears which stole out and back again with the emotions that stirred him.

Fob had scarcely finished his earnest declamation, when they heard creaking steps upon the stair, and in a minute or two, while they listened, the door was thrust open, and a person of no little consequence, if his own countenance was to be taken as a commentary on his pretensions, came forward. He was a fine, sleek, well-fed gentleman, of a good middle stature, apparelled as daintily and cleanly as one could wish; and judging by his jet-black hair and whiskers, which shone again with oil or some other ointment; his shapely and well-cut coat, which sat to his back like a supplementary skin; his pantaloons, so straight and trim that the legs must needs move rectilinearly or not at all; his hat, with its smooth, glossy nap; his boots, quite as polished and serenely bright; and the massy gold chain that stretched like an arc of promise over the azure heaven of a deep-blue vest: judging, we say, by all these, this personage must have been the first favorite of all the guilds and craftsmen, whose business it is to prepare a gentleman for a promenade.

"Are those pants finished, Fob, I mean the superior with open fronts and patent straps?" said the sleek visitor, swelling as he spake and staring over the little tailor's head very fiercely, as if he meditated boring a couple of holes in the wall beyond with his glances. "Curse it, sir, my boy sat up in the ware-house till midnight expecting you every moment. What do you think I'm made of," he continued, dashing his elegant heel on the floor, "cast-iron or New Hampshire granite? Eh?"

"I worked, sir," answered Fob, looking up timidly into the face of the sleek gentleman, "till my needle grew so fine I couldn't see it; and by the time I got down the right leg, the moon was set; my candles all burnt out, and I fell back on my lapboard, sir, and slept till dawn, when I took up my last stitch with the rise of the sun. You shall have them by three this afternoon, if you'll be good enough to wait."

"Rot your slow fingers, do you call that work?" pursued the visitor. "Get in a new supply of lights, and keep it up all night—your wages would bear it. Here am I, paying you at the extravagant rate of ninpence an hour for your labor, and you grumble—do you?"

"I do not, sir," said Fob, meekly, "I am satisfied, perfectly satisfied. I'm bound to make clothes for gentlemen, and it pleases me to see gentlemen wear them, if they suit."

"Do you know, Fob, that it's my private opinion," continued the sleek visitor, "my private opinion, if you had fallen a corpse on that board, and had never got up again—it would have done you great honor?"

Fob assumed a puzzled look at this, as if he didn't exactly fathom and comprehend how that could be.

"I should like to know," resumed the well-apparelled visitor, "whether it isn't as creditable to a man to lose his life on a pair of patent-strapped, open-fronted pantaloons, as in a ditch, with a ball in his head, or a great bag-net in his belly—tell me that, will you? If some man, you, for instance, would only make a martyr of himself in getting up a new-fangled coat, or a vest extraordinary, the craft of clothiers would make a saint of him. Overwork yourself, Fob, and be found by a coroner's 'quest stone-dead, with the pattern griped in your hand, and I'll bury you at my own expense! 'Gad I will—and that as soon as you choose!'"

To this pleasant proposition Fob made no answer, but smiled doubtfully and glanced up at his bird in the cage, thinking, perhaps, he'd rather be black and idle, and in prison like him, than a feeble-bodied tailor, working for journeyman's wages, with a delightful circle of calling acquaintance, like the gentleman there present, among Broadway masters and down-town clothing-merchants.

"Never mind that now," said the master, "you may think of it. Don't fail to run down at three, with the pants on your arm—mark me, now, Fob;" and he shook his finger as he turned for the door. "I've got a wedding-coat to give out to you, to be ready for Monday evening, so there may be a little light Sunday-work for you. You needn't put any button-holes in the coat-tails, as you did once before, if you please. The blunder didn't take with the fashionables, although it was quite original and fresh. Down by three or I cut you off from our shop!"

With this solemn admonition and menace, the high and mighty master tailor from Broadway descended the narrow steps with great caution; and getting once again into the free and open street, and on a good level pavement, launched out into some of his finest paces, at which he was soon so well pleased as to begin smiling to himself, and kept on in both recreations, smiling and launching out, till he reached his shop-door, where he entered majestically in.

After the Broadway master had departed, Fob laid aside his implements and the garment

he was busy on, and getting down from his lap-board, walked to the window, where he stood gazing earnestly out, beyond the river, for several minutes.

"I am sometimes surprised," he at length said, returning, and taking a seat on the corner of his board, while a little globule, that wonderfully resembled a tear, stood in the corner of his eye, "I am sometimes surprised," said he, "at the passionate fondness with which my mind dwells on the country. But it has always been so. When I was a mere child, and my father lived then in the city, how I used to yearn after a sight of the green fields. I watched the months as they waned away, with one hope, and that was, that August would soon be here and take me with its holiday coach away to the dusty turnpike, the long green lane, and the low roof of the homestead. At school I bent over my desk, and folding my hands upon my eyes, to help the labor of fancy, would strive with all my might to call up vividly some little scene or spot that I loved or preferred to others. When the world was rough with me, even at that early time, I would hie away in thought to the side of a shady pool that I knew of, and quench my thirst and drown my troubles in waters purer and more limpid, as it seemed to me, than any other that ever flowed or bubbled up from the earth."

In explanation of the character of his poor neighbor, Puffer afterward learned, that the homestead of Fob's ancestors, for, poor and wretched as he now seemed, the fanciful tailor once had ancestors—the homestead which Fob loved next after his own soul, every rood of which was fairy ground to his memory, peopled with lovely shapes, having power to stir the fountain of tears, every nook and angle associated in his fancy with precious hours long passed away; that this dear homestead had been wrested out of the hands of its rightful heritors, and was, by law and custom, a forbidden realm to him. In spite of this, it was Fob's wont to visit it secretly every year, at midsummer, to wander silently about its familiar fields and dusky woods, and returning when he had gathered a store of pleasant thoughts and fancies to last him a twelvemonth, to bring back such memorials and relics—like those which garnished his garret—as would suggest to his mind the kindest recollections of his favorite haunts.

"Among many images which perpetually come into my mind associated with that old past time," resumed the little tailor, after a pause, "there is one more distinct, more fixed and impressive than any other. I know not why, nor do I know how it should occur to me so forcibly now that you are here. There was a strange old man, who many years ago was a wanderer along the Scarsdale road; they said he had spent his school-holidays somewhere there—I marked him and loved him for that—and whose wild actions were a constant theme at half the country firesides. I saw him once

—at midnight, or very near that time—upon the shore of the Sound, where I had been walking up and down, for I chanced to be a sorrower myself. He had cast off his hat, and stood facing the water with his hair streaming wildly back, and his eyes gleaming forth upon the wave, with all the splendor of madness. He cried aloud as if in discourse with the billows. ‘Has’t anything to lend to day? I must have money—disgorge, or I shall starve—my wife is hungry—my boy cries for bread! Foam will not feed him—nor will these loud-sounding rebuffs of yours! Wave on wave—cent per cent—how they jump, and frolic, and climb each other at a compound pace. Oh, what a leger of interest must there be on the other shore, when we reach it! God’s there, keeping count—mark that!’

The Sound was in a stormy state; a ship was passing that wrestled fiercely with the billows that tumbled against her sides and rushed in the way of her prow, and kept her in a perplexing grasp, struggling in vain to get free. The old man caught sight of this. ‘Dash and howl and drag her down, will you?’ he shouted, ‘that’s the true death-grapple, and, old ship, you must yield. See! she shivers against a rock and down she pitches,—at this the vessel struck a bulging crag, and was in a moment broken into a thousand fragments. ‘Pull her in pieces, joint by joint, and make shreds of her, as I do of this—yes, this cursed scroll that the old engulging miser gapes for in the city! So—so—thus!’ Saying this he snatched from his breast what seemed a large square of parchment, and tearing it into tatters, scattered it with the wind, along the beach!’

‘What became of the fragments—were they never gathered?’ asked Puffer Hopkins.

‘They were—and by me,’ answered Fob.

‘And where are they now?’

‘The Lord, that hath a record of all things lost, only knows!’ he answered. ‘I collected them, patched them together, and after passing from hand to hand, without much advantage to any, they were thrown into some old trunk or garret, where, doubtless, they are mouldering now—and in all human chances, passing through the same process their own owner—that poor, wild, sorrow-stricken old man is undergoing in some almshouse burial-ground!’

‘Do you recollect nothing of the purport of this recovered paper?’ asked Puffer Hopkins.

‘Only this much,’ answered Fob, ‘that it was a conveyance of house and land, with the singular provision that no transfer or sale of the property could be good and sufficient while the child or son, I forget now his name, was living. The names, the dates, much more the boundaries, have all fled from my memory; but I shall never forget the wild tones and eager looks of the old creature that made the deed into fragments; whose voice seemed to echo the sea, and who borrowed from it the method of his acts!’

It suddenly entered the mind of Puffer Hop-

kins, whose attention had been strongly fastened upon the narrative of the little tailor, that the old man, that this sufferer, of so long since, and who was supposed by Fob to lie in his grave, might be none other than his kind and singular companion whom he had followed from the public hall. He was full of the thought, and, interchanging scarcely another word with the tailor, he left the garret, pondering on what he had heard, and striving to gather out of it something that might bear on what seemed the distracted fortunes of Hobbleshank.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE ECONOMY OF MR. FYLER CLOSE AND ISHMAEL SMALL.

RECOVERING from the blow administered by Mr. Leycraft, Ishmael promptly regained his legs, and putting them into active service, he moved down with good speed—the night-air was sharp and pinching—upon a neighboring shop window, and, knocking up his cap-front, employed a minute or two in gazing through the pane, at what lay inside.

‘There’s fine slices of liver in there,’ said Ishmael to himself, ‘and excellent chops, and all sorts of greens. A pound or two of chops would be very nice with carrots; and so would a slab of liver. But I guess I’ll take a small porter-house steak, without the bone, for this time only!’

He accordingly proceeded to invest a small sum in the delicacy in question, skewered it, and concealing it in an ingenious brown paper hood, bore it exultingly away.

‘Something to wet the fibres, of course,’ he resumed, as he approached a grocer’s, ‘something to drown the young critters in; a pint of fresh cider from the Newark keg; the very choicest squeezin’s of a thousand pippins! That’ll do!’ This beverage was procured, and, in a borrowed pitcher, was put in company with the steak; and skipping along faster than ever, bounding nimbly over any obstacle that crossed him, he was in a very few minutes in the hall that passed the broker’s door. Lightly as he stepped along, the ear of the old man was too quick for him, and in answer to a summons from within, he halted, placed his steak and pitcher privily on a chair in the corner of the hall, and turning a baker’s measure that stood by over them, for a screen, entered.

The lodgings of Mr. Close, were, as Ishmael now entered them, if anything, more desolate than ever. There was the dull, bare floor, the naked walls, the great cold chimney, breathing, instead of warmth and comfort, a dreary chillness through the room; and the shivering broker seated by the hearth, as if he would coax himself into a belief that a cheery fire was crackling upon it.

The only light the apartment was allowed,

came in through the open windows in the rear, and was contributed by the various candles and lamps of the neighborhood. In this half-lighted gloom, Mr. Small entered, removed his cap, and stood by the door. He was hailed at once, but in a very feeble voice, by Mr. Close.

"Don't stand there, Ishmael, take a chair by the hearth; it's much pleasanter than by the door." Ishmael came forward and did so.

"Don't you perceive a difference?" said Mr. Close, as soon as Ishmael was seated. "Don't you think of the many pleasant fires that have blazed on this very hearth, and doesn't that make you feel cheerful?"

Ishmael confessed that it was a comforting thought.

"Yet pleasant as it is," pursued Mr. Fyler Close, "as this is a Thursday, I'd like to be out; out in the open air, hurrying through the streets at my best pace. What do you think of that?"

"To class-meeting, of course," suggested Ishmael, with the faintest possible smile on his delightful features.

"To be sure—but my age and infirmities, Ishmael, won't allow me, you know," answered Fyler, pleasantly, "to attend those delightful social and moral gatherings, as I'd liketo."

"Certainly not," rejoined Mr. Small, grinning slightly.

"Nor to be at missionary lectures, dropping in my little mite for the heathen," continued Fyler, "nor at the chapel, listening to the native African giving an account of the vices and wild beasts that beset the aboriginal negro in that benighted country. What a loss to an evangelical mind!"

"Dreadful, sir," answered Ishmael. "And there's the privilege of subscribing to a new cloak for the minister, and helping make up a box of trousers and clean linen for the Tuscaroras!"

"Very true, Ishmael—very true! I'm a melancholy old fellow, doing nothing but sit here all day long—with people coming in and begging me to take twenty per cent. interest, coaxing me with tears in their eyes, to ruin 'em; and when I have done it, coming back to break my furnitur' up like old crockery—just to get me into temper, and make me mar my Christian deportment. That's what I call ingratitude, Ishmael."

"The very basest sort, sir," said Mr. Small, "caught in the wild state, caged, and marked on the peak of the den, 'This here's the monster!'"

"Providence is a wonderful thing, Ishmael," continued Fyler Close.

"Very much so," answered Mr. Small, lifting his knavish gray eyes to a great spider on the wall, sitting in the middle of his web, where the light of a bright lamp shone from without, in waiting for a gold-spotted fly, caught by the legs in a mesh.

"Now I suppose you followed old Hobbleshank providentially, down to his den—eh, Ish-

mael?" said Fyler, leering on Mr. Small. Ishmael replied in the affirmative.

"And no doubt you happened to put your head through the window and overhear what the old gentleman said. He wasn't very noisy, I hope."

"Not more than the Hen and Chickens, in a storm!" answered Ishmael. "Why, sir, he made a speech that 'ud have done honor to a United States senator; and the two old women whimpered like a couple of water-spouts. A delightful speech, sir, and all about that boy again."

"Ha! ha! and didn't he tell 'em how like a father I had been to him; and how I advised him not to bother his head about what was past and gone for good—and the old women, hadn't they something to say, too, Ishmael?"

"Not much; the old story," answered Mr. Small, "about the old house, and the nurse, and all that sort o' thing."

"All in the dark as much as ever?" asked Fyler, pulling his whiskers with all his might, in order to throw an expression of great suffering into his countenance.

"I guess so; and old lunatic's wits are breaking under him, and won't carry him through the winter. That's better yet—don't you think it is?"

"Oh no, by no means," responded Mr. Close.

"We should always hope for the best. It would be a very painful thing—a very painful thing, indeed, Ishmael, to have the worthy old gentleman go mad, out of mere ugliness and spite—because he can't find a boy that he thinks he's the father of. Don't you see that?"

"Very melancholy indeed," said Ishmael, who began to think remorsefully of the neglected cheer in the hall, "so much so that I don't feel equal to a conversation on the subject. Won't you be good enough to excuse me?"

"Certainly—I have too much respect for your feelings. Go, by all means, Ishmael, and the sooner you're abed, reflecting on the wilfulness of man, and the mysterious ways and goings-on of Providence, the better for you! Good night; you'll be in bed at once, I hope. Keep yourself nice and warm, Ishmael."

"I'll try, sir," answered Mr. Small, artlessly, "although it's a piercer out o' doors," and partly aside, "what a precious old man—a perfect martyr to his feelings."

The door was closed; the old man leapt up, and dancing about the room, running forward every now and then to the window and staring into the open casements that furnished the free light to his chamber, rubbed his hands together with very glee.

Ishmael paused for a moment without, to look through a private crevice in the wall and enjoy the spectacle; then uncovered his steaks and pitcher, and taking them in his hand, bore them up stairs, and entered the apartment immediately over Mr. Close. This was scarcely more than a loft at the very top of the house;



with beams and rafters cutting it crosswise and lengthwise in every direction; which beams were garnished with a great number of suspended market-baskets; coils of ancient iron hoops; great pieces of tarred cable; and here and there, bunches of rusty keys of all possible sizes—some perfect giants, suited for great warehouses, and others scarcely large enough for ladies' writing-desks. The room, poor and parti-furnished as it was, had an air of comfort, from the circumstance of the walls being lined on every side with coats, trowsers, vests, roundabouts, and cloaks, hung upon pins about, in great abundance and variety; and when Ishmael, stepping gently about the room, gathered together from corners and hiding-places, fragments of wood and shaving, heaped them in the chimney and lighted a fire that blazed and crackled up the flue, throwing out a wavering flame into the gloom of the apartment, it seemed as if the room swarmed with visitors, who stood shrouded in their various apparel against the wall, and only waited an invitation from Ishmael to come forward and make themselves merry over his fire.

When Ishmael saw how cheerily the fire sparkled on the hearth, he could not hold from laughing gently, and thinking of the old gentleman below stairs. Then he took down from the wall an old rusted gridiron, planted it upon the coals, and spreading his steak upon the bars, watched the process that followed with an eager eye. In a few minutes it was finished to a turn, and while a pleasant savor steamed up and filled the garret with a grateful smell, Ishmael arrayed his cheer on a blue plate on a little mantel or shelf that overhung the hearth; placed a small loaf (a perquisite from the baker) with a knife and fork at its side; and drawing a well-worn countinghouse-stool from a corner, vaulted upon it with an easy leap, and first perching his heels upon a round near the top, and placing the blue plate on his knee, entered with steady glee upon the business before him.

The meal was despatched, as all meals are that are relished hugely; and when it was fairly at an end, Ishmael jumped up, and standing for a minute on the very top of the stool, and raising his hand above him, he brought down from a beam a long clay pipe and a handful of well-dried tobacco; bent down and lighted it with a coal; and, balancing his seat upon its hind legs, fell back against the wall, and watched the smoke complacently, as it was lost among the rafters.

All this process seemed to operate with a kindly influence on Mr. Small, and as, from time to time, he removed the pipe from his lips, he discovered that he was in a fine narrative humor, and having no one to talk to, was driven, from the sheer necessity of the case, to talking to himself.

"That's not so bad," said Ishmael, glancing about at the various distenanted garmen's that

filled the room, "fourpence a day for trowsers, and sixpence for the use o' respectable men's coats with skirts; all for honest voters that goes to the polls in other people's clothes out o' respect to their memory. Nick Finch is a capital 'lectioneerer, and dresses up his voters as pretty and natural as any man ever did; but if Nick's friends only knew what dignified gentleman had wore their coats and trowsers before 'em, they'd carry their heads more like lords and commodores than franchise citizens. Here's this nice suit of crow-black," pursued Mr. Small, turning about and fixing his eye upon the garments in question. There wasn't a nicer parson in the whole hundred and forty pulpits, than that gentleman afore he took to private drinks, and began to borrow money of Uncle Close on his gilt-edged prayer-books and great bibles out o' the pulpit. He used to look quite spruce and fine, I can tell you, when he first come here; then his beard began to stubble out; then his boots was foxy; and then he'd come with his hat knocked in, and his pockets full of small stones, which he tried to pass off on the old 'un for change. When he got to that Uncle Close had him took up by the police for a deranged wagrant; and that was the last of you, old fellow!"

"Volunteer firemen is queer chaps!" continued Ishmael, casting his eyes upon a shaggy white overcoat with enormous pearl buttons. "Bully Simmons was one of the primest, and 'ud play a whole orchestra on a fire-trumpet, on the way to a one-story conflagration. But fires was too much for him—they come on too thick and shiny on wet nights! First, Bully lost his appetite, and then he sold out all his red shirts; then he lost the use o' his legs, and couldn't travel a ladder, with a pipe in his hand; and that made him part with his best figured hoists, every one o' 'em; and, one night, Bully tried his voice agin a nor'wester that was howling among the flames of a big factory, and when he found himself beaten out, he stood at the back of old Forty and shed tears into an engine-bucket like rain; stopped at the old gentleman's on his way home, and sold out his fire-hat, his belts, his boots, and that great rough jacket, for a song; borrowed a coal-heaver's shirt to go home in, and turned agin engines for life. Bully's a very moral man, they say, now, and takes in the tracts by handfuls every time they come round, for shavin' paper."

As Ishmael sat perched upon his stool, framing, in this way, a memoir of each boot, vest, and overcoat, or meditating the course of the next day's business, an humble tap was given at the door, the door slowly opened, and a forlorn-looking personage, in a shabby hat, covered with dust, as was also his whole person, from crown to boot, and having under his arm a small parcel, came in. Advancing timidly, removing his hat, and standing before Ishmael—while he looked piteously in his face, he accosted him.



"Please, sir," said the stranger, "is there no corner of a bed a poor traveller might have, with a morsel to keep down the famine of a long day's march?"

To this appeal Mr. Small made no answer, but reclining against the wall, assumed to fall into a profound slumber.

"Do, for Heaven's sake, hear me!" continued the stranger. "Wake and hear me! I have come from burying an only child in the country, and have neither crust nor couch to keep off the cold and hunger this night."

"Hallo! what's all this?" cried Ishmael, feigning at that moment to waken from his sleep. "Who's here? Thieves! thieves! Do you mean to murder us in cold blood?"

The poor stranger stood shivering before him, with his hat crushed in his hand.

"There are no thieves here," said the stranger, as soon as he could be heard. "No man's life to be taken but mine, from sheer lack of food."

"Oh, you're a beggar, are you?" said Ishmael, rubbing his eyes with his knuckles. "Why didn't you stop below, at the old man's? He would have helped you, I'm quite sure."

"So he would—so he would, sir," said the traveller, "but he's poor too—poorer than I. His health was broken, he told me; he's cut off from all his religious comforts, and sits watching there, in that cold room, the pleasure of Providence. He's a nice, a worthy old man; that I judged by what he said. He referred me to you; there was a benevolent young gentleman up stairs, he said, that would do anything I asked."

"He did, eh? And so you come to me," said Ishmael, smiling mildly upon the stranger. "Lodgin' in a garret and old clothes cem-e-tery; as if I had a scrap to spare. You're a wag—I know you are; but you shouldn't play off your humor on poor lads that lives in the roof. Oh, no—it won't do—and just, by way of apology for your rudeness, be good enough to give my compliments to the first watchman—you know what watchmans are, I guess—you meet at the door. Tell him to lend you his overcoat—he's sure to do it—borry his rattle for a cane—rattles make first-rate walking-sticks, and waddle home as fast as you can. Good night, turnip patch!"

The poor stranger dropped his head, and, without murmur or answer, went away.

Mr. Small now felt that he was wrought to as comfortable a state, intellectually and physically, as was attainable by such a gentleman as himself, and turned his eye bedward. Casting his coat off, and dexterously jerking a boot from either leg, as he stood, into a remote corner, he pulled down from their pegs, every one of them, all the coats, vests, and other garments in the apartment, into a heap upon his trundle-bed, and creeping under the same, his knavish gray eyes, alone, peering out from under the mass, he fell into a tranquil sleep.

## CHAPTER XIV.

PUFFER HOPKINS ENCOUNTERS HOBBLESHANK AGAIN.

THERE could be no doubt—apart from what had occurred to Mr. Small—that a general election was close at hand; and that the city was rapidly falling into a relapse of its annual fever. The walls and stable-doors broke out all over with great placards and huge blotches of declamation; an erysipelas of liberty, temples, and muscular fists, clenched upon hammers, appeared upon the foreheads of the pumps; the air swarmed, as with forerunners of a plague, with ominous flags, streaked from end to end with a red and white and spotted inflammation; journeyman patriots and self-sacrificing office-seekers began to shout and vociferate as in a delirium; in a word, unless the customary blood-letting incident to a charter contest afforded relief, the patient was in a fair way of going stark mad, and losing the humble share of sense with which it looks after its washing and ironing, and provides for its butcher's and baker's dues during the rest of the year. It could scarcely be expected that Puffer Hopkins should escape the general endemic; on the contrary, it being his first season, the symptoms were in him extremely violent and furious. From morning till night he sat at his desk like one spell-bound, fabricating resolutions, preambles, and reports of retiring committees, by the gross; or starting up every now and then and stalking the room vehemently, and then returning and committing the emphatic thoughts that had occurred to him in his hurried travel, to the record before him; varying this employment with speeches without number, delivered in all possible attitudes, to imaginary audiences of every temper, complexion, and constitution.

Sometimes he had very distinctly before him, in his mind's eye, an assemblage where the carting interest prevailed, and where the reduction of corporation cartmen's wages, for instance, might be undergoing an examination.

"Gentlemen," said Puffer to the prospective audience, "gentlemen, I put it to you whether twenty cents a load will pay a cartman and a cartman's horse? Gentlemen, I see a prospect before me for any man that undertakes to work for such prices. In six months he is a pauper, his children's paupers, his horse's a pauper, and what's better, walks up and down the avenue, where he's turned out to die, like the apparition of a respectable dirtman's horse that had been; meeting the aldermen as they ride out in their jaunts, and rebuking 'em to the face for their niggardly parsimony. Hasn't a cartman, a dirt-cartman, rights, I'd like to know? Hasn't he a soul; and why should he submit to this inhuman system; why should the sweat of the poor man's brow be wrung out to

fertilize the soil of the rich man's field?" (Imaginary cheers, beginning in a gentle "G' up," and ending in an earthquake hurrah!)

Then his audience consisted of a great number of individuals, who, from their being clad in nice broadcloth coats, and always having their beards closely trimmed, are supposed to be gentlemen and Christians.

"Fellow-citizens!" cried Mr. Hopkins, "we all see what they're driving at;" alluding to the other party, of course; "they're at work undermining the pillars of society—that's what they would have. Not a man of 'em but would plant a keg of powder under every pulpit, on Sunday morning, and blow all our respected clergy to heaven in a twinkling. They're infidels and agrarians, fellow-citizens, and when they'd done that, they'd let the pews out for apple-stands, and fall straightway to eating soup out of the contribution-plates. If you don't beat 'em at the next election, if you don't rouse yourselves in your strength and overwhelm these monsters and jacobins, I despair of my country—I despair of mankind; and you'll have a herd of vipers saddled on you next year for a corporation!"

Abandoning this disagreeable region, Puffer relieved himself by the fiction of a room full of stout, rosy, comfortable-looking gentlemen, who groaned in spirit under a great burden of city charges, and whose constant saying it was, that they, figuratively only, were eaten up with taxes.

"The city aldermen, the common council of this mighty metropolis," said Puffer, "is nothing but a corporation of boa-constrictors—a board of greedy anacondas—that swallow lot after lot, house upon house, of the freeholders, as if they were so many brick-and-mortar sandwiches. Commissioners of street-opening run the plough through a man's sleeping-room of a morning before he's out of bed; and clap a set of rollers under his dwelling and tumble it into the river, as if it were so much old lumber. Will you submit to this? Never! The spirits of your forefathers protest against it; your posterity implore you to snatch their bread, their very subsistence from the maw of these gigantic wolves in pacific apparel! The little children in their cradles raise their hands and ask you to save *them* from ruin!"

It is impossible to conjecture to what regions of rhetoric and simile-land the imagination of Puffer Hopkins might have conveyed him, now that he was fairly on the wing; for at this moment, and in the very midst of these pleasant fables and suppositions, Puffer received by the hand of a messenger, a notice from the chief or executive committee, directing him to proceed forthwith to the house of Mr. Nicholas Finch, an electioneering agent, and secure his services. Now, Puffer had heard of Nick Finch, as he was familiarly entitled, before; believed him to be as thorough-going, limber tongued, and supple-jointed a fellow as could be found in

the county; and therefore relished not a little the honor of effecting a negotiation for his distinguished talent. Without delay he hurried forth, rousing by the way the messenger, who being a fellow besotted by drink and stupefied with much political talk, in taprooms and elsewhere, had halted in one of the landings, and there, retiring penitentially to a corner, had gone off into a profound and melodious slumber. Performing this agreeable duty, and lending the gentleman an arm to the street, Puffer proceeded to the quarters where he understood Mr. Finch held his lair. He soon approached the precinct, but not knowing it by number, he put the question to one of a group of lads playing at toys against a fence side. A dozen started up at once to answer.

"Nick Finch—Nick Finch, sir—over here, sir, this way, through the alley!" And word having passed along that a gentleman was in quest of Mr. Finch, Puffer was telegraphed along from window to window, area to area, until he was left at the foot of an alley, by an old woman who had galloped at his side for several rods, who shouted in his ear, "Up there, sir, up there!" and hobbled away again. Left to himself, Puffer entered by a gate, and making cautious progress along a boarded lane, arrived in front of a row of common houses, to which access was obtained by aid of outside steps, fastened against the buildings. Ascending the first that offered, he rapped inquiringly at the door, was hailed from within by a decisive voice, and marched in. The apartment he had invaded was an oblong room, with a sanded floor, a desk on a raised platform at the farthest extremity, a full length George Washington in perfect white, standing in one corner, and a full length Hamilton, bronzed, in the opposite. Against the wall, and over a fireplace in which a pile of wood was crackling and blazing, was fastened the declaration of Independence, with all those interesting specimens of handwriting of the fifty-two signers, done in lithograph; and across a single window that lighted the room, where he had entered, was stretched a half American flag, cut athwart, directly through all the stars, and suspended by a tape.

The owner of the voice, a short, thick-set man, with a half-mown beard, a hard, firm countenance, and apparelled in a cart-frock, stood in the middle of the apartment; and before him, ranged on a bench, sat a dozen or so ill-dressed fellows, whose countenances were fixed steadily on his.

"Come in, sir, come in," said the thick-set man. "Don't hesitate—these are only a few friends that are spending a little time with me; paying me a sociable visit of a day or two, that's all." It occurred to Puffer that if these fellows were actually visitors of the gentleman in the cart-frock, that he had decidedly the most select circle of acquaintance of any one he could mention.

"I'm glad you've come, sir," continued the electioneerer. "I've been expecting you some days."

"Then you know me?" said Puffer.

"Of course I do," answered the other. "Allow me to introduce you to my friends. Gentlemen" (turning to the line of ragged gentry on the bench), "Puffer Hopkins, Esq., of the Opposition committee. Rise, if you please, and give him a bow."

The ragged gentry did as they were bid, and straightway sat down again, as if the unusual exertion of a salute had entirely exhausted them.

"I am afraid I interrupt business," said Puffer. "You seemed engaged when I came in."

"I was," answered the electioneerer, "and you entered just in the nick of time to aid me. You must act as an inspector of election; you have a good person, a clear, full voice, and will judge my voters tenderly. Take this chair, if you please!" Saying this, he at once inducted Puffer into a seat behind the desk on the raised platform, placed before him a green box, and proceeded to distribute among the gentlemen on the bench, a number of small papers curiously folded, which they received with a knowing smile.

"Now, gentlemen, go up as I give the signal," said Mr. Finch. "Mr. Peter Foil, will you have the goodness to deposite your ballot?"

At this one of the company who had found his way, by some mysterious dispensation, into a faded suit of black—it was the broken-down parson's—but whose hair was, nevertheless, uncombed, and his hat in very reduced circumstances, shambled across the floor and made a show of inserting a vote in the green box before Puffer Hopkins.

"That will never do, sir," said the electioneerer, rather sternly, as he was crossing back again. "You shuffled up to the counter as if you were shoaling through the market, according to your well-known habits, stealing pigs' feet of the butchers to make broth of; and when you attempted to give the inspector your ticket, any one could have sworn you had been a fish-vender's secretary, thrusting your hand in a basket to pull out a flounder or a bunch of eels; try it again!"

Mr. Foil renewed the attempt—this time, with greater success.

"That's better," said Mr. Finch, encouragingly, "worthier the respectable man whose clothes you've got on; more of the air of a civilized being. Now, Mr. Runlet."

At this a heavy-built personage proceeded to perform his duty as a franchise citizen, but in so cumbrous a gait and with so weak an eye to the keeping and symmetry of his part, as to call down a severe rebuke from Mr. Finch.

"You pitch about as if you were on your own ploughed land at Croton, and not down here, earning handsome wages on the pavement for doing freeman's service. You must

walk more level, and not up and down like a scart buffalo. Carry your arms at your side, and don't swing them akimbo, like a pair of crooked scythe-sneaths. You'll do better with your dinner to steady you!"

After Mr. Runlet, a third was summoned, who wore the garments of the volunteer fireman; but was condemned as failing most lamentably in his swagger, and missing to speak out of a corner of his mouth, as if he carried a segar in the other. After several trials he amended his performance, and succeeded at last in bullying the inspector with a grace, and getting his vote in by sheer force of impudence.

Another was called, who, springing up with great alacrity, endued, in a pair of stout corduroys, with a shirt of red flannel, rolled back upon his arms over one of white, a great brawny fellow, pitched about from one quarter of the room to another, putting it into imaginary antagonists with all his might; at one time knocking one on the head with his broad hand, then teasing another's shins with a side-way motion of the leg, and discomfiting a third with a recoil of a bony elbow, to the unqualified satisfaction and delight of Mr. Finch and all lookers-on, and then retiring to his seat, apparently exhausted and worn out with his savage sport.

About half the company had been drilled and exercised in this manner, when a door was suddenly thrown open at the lower end of the apartment, a shrewish face thrust in, and a shrill voice appertaining thereto called out that dinner was ready, and had better be eaten while it was hot. Puffer Hopkins caught sight of a table, spread in a room that was entered by a descending step or two. The voters in rehearsal started to their feet, and cast longing eyes toward the paradise thus opened to their view, and before Mr. Finch could give order one way or the other, they had broken all bounds, and rushed down, like so many harpies, on the banquet spread below.

"If my eyes are not glandered," cried Mr. Finch, as soon as they were gone, "this is capital sport. Dang me, Mr. Hopkins, if I wouldn't rather drive a tandem through a china-shop than manage these fellows. I've polished 'em a little, you see; but they're too thick on the wall yet, they daub and plaster and don't hard-finish up. You'd like to have 'em for a day or two, wouldn't you?"

Puffer, descending from the inspector's seat, which he had filled during the rehearsal with all the gravity he could command, and, complimenting Mr. Finch upon the show of his men, admitted that he would, and that he was there on that very business.

"There isn't a better troop in town, though I say it," pursued the agent, "a little rough, but there's capital stuff there. I don't flatter when I assert that Nick Finch gets up finer and sturdier rioters than any man in town. Only look at that chap in the red shirt—he's a giant, a perfect Nilghau with horns, in a crowd!"

Puffer answered that he thought that proposition couldn't be safely denied.

"Perhaps my sailors an't got the salt water roll exactly; but they'll pass pretty well I reckon for East river boatmen and Hellgate pilots, and that's full as good; you want twelve men for three days' work, in how many wards?"

"The whole seventeen if you please," answered Puffer. "I'm afraid to try 'em in so many," continued Mr. Finch. "You might have 'em for five river wards, and one out o' town; and the volunteer fireman (he's first rate when he's warmed with a toddy), for any number. Terms, twenty-five dollars per diem, as they say in Congress."

"It's a bargain, sir," said Puffer, seizing the virtuous gentleman by the hand. "You'll bring them up yourself?"

"I will, you may depend on it; you're a lucky man—the other side offered me twenty, and as much oats as my horse could eat in a week, but it wouldn't do."

With this understanding Puffer left; the agent crying after him to call in on Monday week, when they would be finally broken in—"You make a capital inspector; all you want is age and silver spectacles to make you as respectable a rogue as ever sat behind a green box!"

Breathing the word "mum" in an under tone, and shaking his head in reproof at the hardihood of the agent, Puffer descended into the yard.

He had reached the ground, and was turning to leave the place, when he discovered moving across the extremity of the yard and passing into a house many degrees poorer than the agent's, a figure bent with years; he walked with a slow shuffling gait, and pausing often, wrung his hands and looked keenly into the earth, as if all his hopes lay buried there. Puffer knew not whether to advance and greet the old man as his heart prompted, or to withdraw; when he raised his head as if he knew the footstep that was near, and, discovering Puffer Hopkins, started from the dotage of his walk and manner, hastened across the ground, and while his face brightened at every pace he hailed him from the distance.

"God bless you,—God bless you, my boy!" cried Hobbleshank. "Where have you tarried so long? You have not forgotten the old man so soon, eh? If you knew how often I had thought of you, you would have paid me but fair interest on my thoughts to have called at the old man's lodgings, and asked how the world, a very wilful and wicked one, had gone with him? Am I right?"

"You are, you are," answered Puffer, who could not fail to be touched by the kindly eagerness of the old man. "I have abused your goodness, and was repenting of my folly but this morning—I meant to call."

"You did!" said the old man quickly. "Well never mind that, but come with me."

With this they entered a low building, the roof of which was moss-grown and hung over

like a great eyebrow, and the door sustained by a single hinge, stood ever askew, allowing snow, tempest, and hail, to beat in and keep a perpetual Lapland through the hall. Opening the first door they entered a square room, cold, bare, and desolate-looking, with no soul apparently present.

"How is this?" said Hobbleshank. "I thought Peter Hibbard dwelt here."

"So he does," answered a broken voice from the corner of the apartment, "Peter Hibbard's body lodges here. Heaven save his soul—that may be wandering in some other world."

"Are you Peter Hibbard?" asked Hobbleshank, approaching the bed-side where the speaker lay.

"Peter Hibbard am I," he answered, "as far as I can know, though I sometimes think Peter—one Peter—died better than a score of years ago. When a man's soul is killed and his heart frost-stricken, then he's dead, isn't he?"

"He should be!" answered Hobbleshank, "but Heaven isn't always so kind. Sometimes the body's dead and the soul all alive, like a fire, driving the poor shattered body to and fro, on thankless tasks and errands that end in despair: that's worse."

"There's no despair for me," pursued Peter, disclosing a lean haggard face, and leering at Hobbleshank from under the blanket. "There's nothing troubles me; I've got no soul."

"Where's your wife, Peter?" asked the old man.

"I've got none," answered the other. "No wife, nor child, nor grand-child, boy nor girl, nor uncle, aunt, sister, brother, or neighbor; I and these four walls keep house here."

"But where are your old friends?" continued Hobbleshank.

"Ah! my old friends, there you are, are you? oh, ho! There was Phil Sherrod, he died in his bed of an inflamed liver; Phil died finely they say, singing Old Hundred. Don't believe it; he yielded the ghost choking the parson with his hands. Parker Lent, at sea; Bill Green, in jail for a stolen horse, it was St. John's pale horse they say; Charlotte Slocum, she married a Long island milkman and was drowned. There was another," continued the bed-ridden man, rising in his couch and pressing his hand upon his brow, and peering from under it toward Hobbleshank, and Puffer, "another."

"Yes—what of her?" asked Hobbleshank quickly.

"What of her?" he replied, "are you sure it was a woman? Yes, by Heaven it was, it was; a rosy buxom girl, but never Peter Hibbard's wife, why not?"

With this question he fell back and lay with his eyes wide open and glaring; but still and motionless as a stone.

"Why not?" said the bed-ridden man waking suddenly from his trance of silence. "Why should Sim Lettuce win where I lost? That was a flaming carbuncle on Sim's nose, and

many's the laugh Hetty and I have had thinking of it; and yet she married him spite of it."

"And Sim died—what then?" asked Hobbleshank, watching the countenance of him he questioned with painful earnestness. "What then, my good sir, what then?"

"Let me see—Sim died; the carbuncle struck in and turned to a St. Anthony's fire, and carried him off; Hetty turned nurse. Did you know that? Nurse to a lovely lady; she died too one day. Hetty went off—I followed her."

"Yes, yes, you followed her," repeated Hobbleshank, anxious to keep the wandering wits of the sick man to the subject. "Go on."

"I followed her—didn't I say so! On my honor, red-nosed Sim's widow would not have me, eh! eh! not she. Off she slipped to keep a garden in an out-of-the-way place, I can tell you. Peter Hibbard watched her many a year, but she never would be Mrs. Hibbard, and here I lie this day without a wife, or child; child, nor grandchild, boy nor girl, nor uncle, aunt, sister, brother, or neighbor. We have a merry time, these four walls and I."

It was in vain that Hobbleshank attempted again and again, and by various devices, to bring back his mind to a narrative humor; he kept reciting the incidents of his hopelessness and desolation, and after a while fell into a wild jumble, where everything pointless and trivial was huddled together, and then he declined into a senseless torpor, where he lay dumb to every speech and entreaty of the old man.

Leaving him in this mood, Hobbleshank and Puffer turned away from his bed-side and sending in a neighbor that had stood watching at the door, for on such chance aid the bed-ridden man trusted solely for life—to minister to his wants, they escaped swiftly from the place. In perfect silence they walked through street after street together, until they reached a corner where their way separated.

"All is lost, all is lost!" said Hobbleshank grasping Puffer Hopkins by the hand, as tears flowed into his eyes; and, parting without a further word, in gloom and silence, each took his way.

## CHAPTER XV.

### PUFFER HOPKINS INQUIRES AFTER HOBBLESHANK.

"ALL is lost, all is lost!" The piteous look and tone with which the old man had uttered these words, lingered in the ear of Puffer Hopkins, long after they had parted, and came up in every interval of business and labor, to fill the pause and excite in his mind a vague wonder as to what they might refer. Some deep trouble, some profound grief, reaching through years, and embracing the whole hope of the old man's life, they seemed to point at. He resumed the pursuit in which the messenger had

found him engaged, but every now and then there started out of the papers before him the wo-stricken face of Hobbleshank and he heard his voice, repeating again and again, that all was lost, lost. Wavering in this way between idleness and toil, night drew on; a dark stormy and troubled night; winds howling about the Fork, clamoring at the chamber-windows, where he lay, as if demanding entrance; subsiding, springing up afresh, and suggesting to the watcher, to whom the turmoil would not allow sleep, thoughts of poor sailors far abroad, sailing on the wide ocean, reefing and gathering canvass, or lying-to, for shelter's sake, in cold harbors, or drifting along on the pitiless tide.

Perplexed by thought of storm and tempest, in the midst of all which his mind had recurred to the subject of yesterday, Puffer awoke, and after in vain endeavoring to shake off the gloomy shadow of the old man that still haunted his chamber, he resolved to call at the lodgings of Hobbleshank and seek there further confirmation of the good or evil of his thoughts.

Making good speed for the fulfilment of his purpose, he was soon apparelled and in the open air. The sky was clear as if no cloud had ever crossed it; the house-tops lay basking in the early sun, and the streets, half shadow, half light, were filled with a throng of people come forth to enjoy the tranquillity of the morning. The distance was not great, and he found the place he sought at once, and in a moment was directly at the entrance of the chamber, where he knew by his description, Hobbleshank lodged.

The door was ajar, and Puffer entered without notice. On either side of the hearth the two old women were seated, discoursing in a whisper. A night taper flickered in its socket on the shelf; the fire was smouldering and expiring in its own ashes, and the sunlight, as it streamed through the small window in the wall, showed the features of the two women, haggard, care-worn, and anxious. The elder was speaking as he came in.

"Why do you say me nay, when I tell you it must have tumbled in such a night; I'm not deaf, good woman, though seventy and past—Heaven save us! Do you think I did not hear the storm, howling and raging? Your own eyes saw the chimney fall, and the same wind that blows down chimney-stacks must overturn steeples and church-tops. Let me see—it was built before the war, so it had lived to a good old age, and was cut down not a minute before its time."

"Why do you vex yourself with thinking in this way, Aunt Gatty?" asked the other, laying her hand gently in her arm and looking her anxiously in the face. "The storm was heavy. God help our poor old friend that was abroad in it; but the city still stands!"

"Be not too sure of that!" answered the other. "Have a care! Are you quite clear that the fire-bell was not ringing all through the night? I heard it in every pause of the storm;

and what is not blown over you may be sure was burnt up."

"Grant it so," said Dorothy. "Grant, as you say, that the city was ravaged and torn from end to end by fire and tempest, it was no fault of ours!"

"No fault of ours, do you say?" cried Aunt Gatty, turning suddenly about, and laughing hysterically in her face. "Then all that howling of winds meant nothing? All the ships that went ashore or were dashed against piers and wharves, did it in mere sport! Ha! ha! Children that perished in the streets, or in dwellings drearier than the open street, and beasts frozen in the field, were all in a frolic?—Ha! ha! No, no," she continued, dropping her voice to a fearful whisper, "these were judgments—come near to me and I'll tell you how."

Dorothy, at this bidding, drew close to her side, and watched for what she said.

"Where was the old man last night?" she asked, "can you tell me that?"

"Heaven knows!" echoed the other. "It's morning, and he has not come."

"Did we go search for him?—did we awaken neighbors, and raise the cry that a good old man was perishing somewhere, and hurry off in hunt for him? Did we ring bells and alarm all sleepers through the town—that we do when even a worthless old building of boards is burning—why not for a dear old friend? No, no—he's dead," she cried, in a voice that pierced the ear to the quick. "Dead, somewhere, and his blood is on our old idle heads! Dead! dead!"

With this she turned away, and, heeding no further any speech that was addressed to her, sat in the corner of the hearth, mumping, and muttering unintelligibly to herself. At this moment Puffer Hopkins came forward, and made inquiry for Hobbleshank.

"Good Lord! you did not know then that the old man has been absent all night long!" she answered, sighing; "she knows it, she knows it too well! All night in the rough weather; Heaven send that he has found shelter in some shed, or under some poor roof, although it's not to be hoped. Have you seen the old man of late? you are his friend."

"I am, and saw him but yesterday morning," answered Puffer. "I expected, from what passed then, to find him downcast, but safe at home at least."

"Good angels help us all!" cried Dorothy, fixing her eyes upon the ceiling; "was he calm when you left him, or was he stirred with a passion?"

"Greatly moved, I must confess; cut to the very heart, if I may judge by what fell from him," answered Puffer. "He was in despair, and left me weeping, hurrying swiftly away!"

"I knew it would be so!" exclaimed Dorothy—"I knew it would be so! Arouse! Aunt Gatty, arouse!" she continued, bending down to the ear of her companion, and crying at the top of her voice. "This gentleman has seen

Hobbleshank, and has seen him fly away from him like one distracted! Do you hear me?"

"Did you say Joe was dead?" answered Aunt Gatty, gazing at the other like one in a dream. "I thought such a storm was too much for him." And she relapsed again into silence, or mumbled in confused and broken words.

"Poor thing! she thinks of her Joe that was drowned half a lifetime since; watching all night through, with age and infirmity, have bewildered her brain. She thinks, sorrowful creature, that St. Paul's steeple, too, fell in the storm last night; nothing can drive it from her mind; and, because a neighbor's chimney was overturned and a few tiles blown through the street, she will have it that the storm has made a wreck of the city, leaving no stone upon another—poor thing!"

"Then you have no tidings of Hobbleshank, and can not tell where he passed the night?" asked Puffer.

"None whatever. He left us," said Dorothy, "yesterday, a little after noon, in cheerful spirits, for he had learned, by a poor stranger that came in from the country, something relating to his child that was lost many years ago. He said that a few hours would bring him back a happy man; it will be happiness enough for us, alas!—for this poor old woman, that has been his friend and companion for fifteen years—if he come back alive."

"Who was this poor stranger that you speak of?" continued Puffer. "Is he known to any one here, or did he utter his news aloud?"

"The stranger," answered Dorothy, "was stained with travel, and bore with him a parcel, which he did not open in our presence. Aunt Gatty thought it might be some garment of the child's that was lost. They spake apart, the stranger pointing often to the parcel under his arm; something was said of a bed-ridden man—whom, we could not guess; and then they went forth together. Since then the old man has not returned."

"What noise was that?" cried Aunt Gatty, starting up at this moment, and looking up earnestly into the face of Puffer Hopkins. "A heavy wall has fallen; you heard the bell jingle as it fell? It tolls for him!"

"For Heaven's sake give her comfort," said Dorothy, appealing to Puffer, who stood aside, not knowing how to answer this sudden question; "tell her the city is not in ruins, that no church-steeple is cast down."

"St. Paul's stands this morning," answered Puffer, "where it has stood many thousand mornings; the sun shines upon its weathercock as high in air as ever. Would that Hobbleshank could be found as securely as that!"

"Hobbleshank!" echoed Aunt Gatty, "I knew him in his lifetime; he was an excellent old man, and sorely tried; let me see, where was he laid? In Trinity yard; oh, no, no, that was too full. In the middle burying-ground. He had no right there, poor man; he was not stout enough to fill a grave. Ha! ha! I have



it, it was in the old brewery well, where Tom was drowned; they buried him there because he knew Tom, when the poor boy was alive."

"Does she indeed think her old friend to be dead?" asked Puffer, looking from one to the other.

"She does, and its that that has unsettled her mind," answered Dorothy; "Her life seems to hang by some strange link, an invisible thread, on that of the old man; with him she seems to think the sun is blotted out and all things fallen into decay, like herself. For her sake, I would that Hobbleshank might return."

"There was no mark, then, by which you could guess his purpose, or the course he might take to bring it about?" said Puffer Hopkins; "nothing by which you could judge, further than it involved a thought of the lost child—on what his mind is fixed?"

"Did I say there was nothing more? I was wrong. He wore with him when he left, he came back for it, a woman's likeness, painted in a breast pin; the pin was a great square one, and the lady, a mild lovely creature, with gentle eyes. He took it from the closet, and fixed it in his breast, where it had not been in my knowledge, ever before. His look softened when his eye fell on it; and his step was slower, it seemed to me, and more thoughtful, when he left, than it had been when he came in. I thought the lady's face had touched his heart."

"It's all darkness and shadow to me now," said Puffer, pondering and fixing his eyes upon the ground, "darkness, with a single ray of light: you have told me all?"

"All! But do, I pray you, bring back the old man; seek for him, as you would for your own father! Spare no time, night or day to track his steps. There is some deep trust rests upon him, some great wrong to be avenged. If he die in the streets, with sealed lips; if his old life should be taken by wicked hands, and such may be watching for him, who shall answer? Will you try, will you seek him out? Promise me on your truth!"

As the woman spake she raised both her hands, and letting them fall, as in benediction, on the person of him she addressed, she watched him silently for an answer.

"I am but poor and helpless myself," answered Puffer, "with few friends and narrow means; I know not what I can do, but, in God's name, I will do what I can; what a friendless and fatherless young man may hope to do."

"For his sake, for hers, for your own humanity's sake, be true to what you would do!" exclaimed Dorothy, glancing from the helpless old creature at the hearth toward Puffer, who stood, glowing with his good resolution, by the door.

She had uttered the entreaty; turned to the old woman, who began to speak again, and, when she had turned again, Puffer was gone.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE NOMINATING CONVENTION HATCH A CANDIDATE.

To what purpose had Puffer Hopkins pledged his efforts in tracing and recovering Hobbleshank? What clew, what single clew remained in his hand, now that he reviewed all that had fallen within his knowledge, relating to the old man?

At one time it had occurred to him that light shone through upon his fortunes, from the chance discourse of the tailor; that hope was at an end, for, on a questioning he extracted no more than he knew already, and that was nothing to the purpose.

Any hope that had arisen from the wish to enlist the personal services of his poor neighbor in a further search, was idle; for Fob, from overwork, feebleness of body, and, as it seemed to Puffer, some secret care that was preying upon him, was failing every day. To be sure, Fob dwelt upon the incident he had first recited the same as ever; spoke of the look and voice of the old man; his wild talk with the billows and breakers, and his final act in rending the parchment in pieces. Of what avail was this? It might be a mere fantasy, a useless humor of both, that this man was Hobbleshank, this paper, the bond and tenure by which he held or relinquished his rights. Then Fob would pass from this topic to talk of the old subjects, the country, the wood, the field; dwelling upon them with more enthusiasm than ever, and pausing at times, to bedew their memory with a tear. While his strength lasted, the little tailor performed his daily tasks manfully, murmuring not once, repining not at all, save over the remembrance of his country life.

Any hope, therefore, built by Puffer on the services of Fob dwindled day by day. To what purpose, then, had Puffer Hopkins proffered aid in tracing and recovering Hobbleshank? To none whatever! Feeling this, and admitting to himself how completely darkness hedged him in on every side, he determined—as most people do in such emergencies—to let the world take its course, but at the same time was ready to seize promptly on the first opportunity that offered, and, to do him justice, fervently hoping it might be near at hand, to execute his trust. In the meantime, and while the fortunes of Hobbleshank were so full of shifting currents that hurried onward, or eddies that tarried and were lost in themselves, the tide of public life rushed on, swelling steadily. Puffer had learned by this time that pausing is to a politician, ruin; and so he kept himself abroad in the stream. He was now known as an active and zealous partisan; was regarded as a promising and rising young man; and somehow or other had found himself, by some secret agency, which he could not guess (it was the kind old man toiling for him in silence), pushed forward steadily, and appointed to offices of confidence

and trust, as they arose in the due progress of his career. A convention to nominate a mayor for the city of New York, was soon to be held and assembled at Fogfire hall; a delegate to this he was likewise appointed. Prompt in the performance of all his duties of this nature, Puffer only waited for the evening of its gathering to make his way to the hall. The night was somewhat stormy, and the streets were muffled and shrouded in mist, but this did not prevent its being quite apparent that something more than usual was afoot at Fogfire hall.

Brighter lights streamed through the tap-room windows as he approached; a din of voices was heard issuing forth and silencing the turmoil of the street, whenever the door opened; and quick feet hurried in and out, and kept up a constant commotion at the door. The tap-room—at all times a resort of gossips and talkers—swarmed with politicians and quidnuncs, some of whom were gathered in knots, from which a gusty voice would spring up every now and then above all others, and then subside again; some walking the room in couples, arm-in-arm at a hurried pace; some lounging about easily, with sticks in their hands from group to group, and others, dropping off from the knots of loud talkers, would saunter to the bar, and arraying themselves in front of a long round pole—a liberty-pole shaved down and shod at either end with brass—replenished the thirsty spirit without stint. The air of the place was close and odorous, and every man's face was flushed and wore a burnt and heated look, as if the tap-room lay directly in the fiery zone. Through this torrid region Puffer passed, recognising a friend or two by the way, and pausing for a grasp; and emerging at a side door upon the hall, ascended a flight of stairs and was presently in the committee-room.

The delegates there assembled in great numbers, stood about the floor talking in groups, and growing red and excited as they plunged, by degrees, deeper and deeper into the topics of discourse. In a few minutes, when the room was quite full and the hubbub at its height, a pale man in whiskers stood up at the other end of the apartment, holding his hat in one hand and knocking with the knuckles of the other, with great vehemence, on a table at his side. This sound caused a sudden silence, and the members wheeling about in a body, contemplated any further movement on the part of the pale man in whiskers, with great interest; which united gaze the pale man met with another quite as bold and decided, and, drawing a deep breath, he nominated, in a loud voice, Mr. Epaminondas Cobb, as chairman of the committee; which was unanimously acceded to; then a couple of secretaries; then a door-keeper; all of whom with due ceremony assumed their respective stations, and the committee was organized and in session.

Then Mr. Epaminondas Cobb, who was a short brick-complexioned gentleman, with dim eyes, and a pair of stout silver spectacles

astride a dignified, but by no means massive nose—stood up and asked them if it was their further pleasure to proceed to the nomination of a mayor for the city and county of New York? To which question no response being given, it was concluded (the chief wisdom of public bodies in such cases lying in the observance of profound silence) it was; and they accordingly entered at once upon the exciting and engrossing business of nomination.

Candidates were forthwith put in nomination by members with great rapidity; some were merely named; others proclaimed and sustained and advocated at length, in formal harangues. There was one committee-man, a little shrunken dried-up gentleman, who was up and down every five minutes, with a speech in advocacy of the extraordinary and unquestionable claims of Thomas Cutbill, butcher; the said Thomas Cutbill being the great man of his neighborhood, the good Samaritan of his ward; and, furthermore, a luminous expounder to the delight of the little committee-man and a knot of cronies, of profound political doctrine, at a familiar bar or coffee-room, where Mr. Cutbill condescended to be present of a Wednesday night and take a hand in backgammon or other intricate games, there going forward.

"I knows Thomas Cutbill," said his champion, "and his claims is decided; pig lead isn't surer. A benevolenter gentleman and a more popular one was never known. To Mr. Cutbill the people was indebted for the new fish-market; and asking who it was that invented the mode of ringing alarms by districts, he'd beg leave of the committee to say Cutbill was the man! Cutbill had been vilified, but there never was a nicer man to the poor, a more lovely friend of the pauper, than that aggravated individual. He was proud of Mr. Cutbill. Mr. Cutbill should have his vote!"

When the little champion had uttered this vindication something like half-a-dozen times, a very mild gentleman remarked, that what the gentleman opposite had said was true enough; Mr. Cutbill was a very benevolent and worthy individual, for he had to his knowledge, on several occasions arrested lads, ragged and unclean lads, in the street, and advised them—in good faith advised them, laying his hand kindly upon their heads—to go home and wash their faces, and put on clean clothes! What had the gentlemen of the committee to say to that?

On another occasion he had known Mr. Cutbill lift a poor woman out of the gutter, take her by the arm and lead her directly into a respectable neighboring house, seat her on a sofa in the front parlor, and call out, with a vehemence worthy of himself and the charitable object he had in view, for a jug of hot negus immediately, and if that couldn't be had, for half a dozen of Seville oranges, for the poor lady. Wasn't that man worthy of their suffrages, he would like to know?

Just as this speaker was concluding there entered the committee-room in great state, a



gentleman enveloped in a long brown overcoat, buttoned to the chin; an ample bandanna muffling his lower features, and his head carried erect. He entered in a straight line, aimed for a blank corner of the room, looking about as if surprised that the committee could be in session and he not there—attaining which, he cast off his over-coat, unmuffled his chin, and rising at once bolt-upright in his place, proceeded to deliver himself of his sentiments, first taking his hat by either rim and fixing it on more firmly than ever.

"A single case was nothing this way or that," said the new comer, "did Mr. Cutbill make it a habit, he would like to know, to send ragged boys home for clean clothes? Did he go about encouraging them to dismiss their broken garments? that was the point. Was or was not Mr. Cutbill privately associated, in interest, in some clothing or ready-made linen establishment? Was Mr. Cutbill a tall man or a short man? Did he wear red vestings or white? Was he lean-featured or rubicund? He would not vote for any man as candidate for the mayoralty of this great city until he knew his person, his principles, his private habits, to a hair—to an inch! He might as well tell the committee at once that he had his eye on a gentleman that would make the very candidate they wanted. On reflection, the gentleman alluded to had differed from the community in some slight particulars; he was a man in years, of a very venerable appearance, but somehow or other had fancied that all his grand-children were vinegar-cruets, and tried to unstopper them by screwing their heads off. This had occasioned his going into the country for a time, and this would, perhaps, prevent his running at the approaching election."

Opposite this speaker sat a thin, thoughtful gentleman, rather grotesquely habited in a red vest, which wrapped him round like a great Mohawk blanket, who watched what fell from him, touching the eccentric candidate, with extraordinary interest.

The other was no sooner seated, than this individual stared to his feet, and stared wildly about.

"The man he desired to see presiding over the destinies of this vast metropolis, was the very one that Mr. Fishblatt had just mentioned; but he couldn't be had! Who then should it be? Not the Cham' of Tartary, he was quite sure: not the Imaum of Muscat, nor the King of the Pelew islands. He must be honest; honest by all means. He must be in favor of the largest liberty—boundless liberty, he might say; also opposed to all private rights. He wanted a man in favor of all colors—of no color himself. In a word, he must be opposed entirely to the present condition of things; but what condition of things he must be in favor of he (the speaker) wouldn't at present undertake to decide. This is no musical forest," concluded the gifted declaimer, reiterating sentiments he had expressed many times before, but more particularly to our know-

ledge on Puffer's introduction to the Bottom Club. "This is no musical forest, no Hindoo hunter's hut, got up for effect at the amphitheatre. We haven't trees here alive with real birds!—the branches laden with living monkeys!—the fountains visited by long-legged flamingoes!—the green-sward covered with gazelles, grazing and sporting! Oh, no! we are a mere caucus of plain citizens, in our everyday dresses, sitting in this small room, on rough benches, to reorganize society by giving it a new mayor, worthy of ourselves!" And thereupon the illustrious chairman of the Bottom Club sat down.

At the conclusion of this powerful and majestic effort, the committee might have laughed, had they not reflected that the speaker controlled a couple of hundred votes or so—the disciples and dependants of the Bottom Club—and they, therefore, on the contrary, looked extremely grave and respectful.

Candidates now began to be proclaimed by the score; sometimes they were let slip—one by one in quick succession—then half a dozen propounders would rise and discharge their names among the committee in a body. The chairman was constantly up shouting order; and whenever a pause occurred, some member or other would spring to his legs and call their attention to the undoubted claims, the unsurpassed, unequalled, and unrivalled services of the Smith or Brown whom he happened to advocate.

At length, after a great number of ballotings, and a great variety of fortune, the contest was narrowed to two candidates; upon these the divided members of the convention pitched their whole strength, and, stripping themselves to a final rencontre, they respectively entered upon the public and private history of the gentlemen in question, with a minuteness and eagerness of biographical ardor quite astonishing.

One of these was Mr. Bluff, a wholesale grocer; the other, Gallipot, a retail painter. Mr. Bluff was a stout, comely gentleman; Gallipot, thin and livid, as became his trade. Mr. Bluff leaned toward the elegant and ornate in dress; Gallipot to the vernacular and homespun. Mr. Egbert Bluff exercised his wholesale ingenuity in disposing of pipes, punch-cons, casks, and merchandise in gross; while the revenues of Gallipot accrued from the embellishment, by retail, of the houses of the middle-class, the adornment of tradesmen's boards, and the displays of professional literature on attorneys' signs. Mr. Bluff, the master of every elegant accomplishment, from the delicate swaying of a cane, up to the cock of a hat and the proper wearing of a ruffle—belonged to the Ionian order of candidates; Gallipot, rough in dress, blunt of speech, rude of grasp, was of the sterner Doric.

The two candidates, so contrasted, stood palpably before the mind's eye of the committee; and it was their present and immediate

duty to determine, not the separate value of each of their qualities in itself; but their aggregate influence in either candidate on the community, and their value when translated in good current votes.

How many streets—how many blocks, squares, wards, could they respectively command? All they had done through many years of struggle and endeavor in their various callings, for they were both men in middle-life, was now to be nicely weighed against ballots, little talismanic papers—the secret prescriptions of the public acting as the physician; the whole life of each to be tallied off against so many of these mystic counters.

"As for Mr. Bluff," said Mr. Fishblatt, who was always the first to deliver his views on the topic before the committee, "I beg to know whether it is true, as I am informed, he is the gentleman that wears a lepine watch with five jewels? Before receiving an answer to this, I would inquire whether Mr. Bluff keeps a carriage, with a black footman in a silver-buckled hat and white cambric pocket-handkerchief? Also, could any member of the committee instruct him whether Mr. Bluff's pew was lined with red damask and fastened with copper tacks, rotten-stoned every Saturday morning by one of his servants, privily admitted to the church? Mr. Bluff might dress his children in scalloped collars and laced pantalettes—the children of a public man did not always belong to the public (although he sometimes made it a present of them when he died), but what business had Mr. Bluff to put two stone dogs on his stoop? If they had been lions, he (Mr. Fishblatt) might have forgiven him; two great roaring, open-mouthed lions; even a pair of elephants. These were noble animals. But dogs! Had any gentleman of the committee kept a diary of Mr. Bluff's doings for the past fifteen years? Was any one prepared to say what had been his private and personal habits during that time? If not, the committee were entering upon a most solemn and important business, with very imperfect materials in their hands. He had heard that there had been a lurking committee, of five or more, to institute a watch upon Mr. Bluff; to have an eye upon all he did and said from the first moment he was contemplated as a candidate. Where was that committee? They had followed him (Mr. Bluff), he had been informed in confidence, for more than two weeks; knew all his opinions, as expressed in various places of public and private resort. Mr. Fishblatt would like to see their minutes. He had been told that Mr. Bluff had been measured, in all the past fortnight, for two new coats, and a new double vest of black velvet. What was the meaning of this?"

Mr. Fishblatt had spoken in his hat, which he insisted on in despite the remonstrance of the brick-complexioned chairman, as being more formidable, and more according to strict congressional method, when, at this juncture, occasioned by the loud and peremptory character

of his oratory or from some other adequate cause, a brass trumpet, fixed against the ceiling, was dislodged, and striking Mr. Fishblatt on the crown, buried him to the eyes. Before he could fairly emerge from this sudden midnight and renew his appeal, another speaker had possession of the floor.

"He had satisfied himself," this was a gentleman of a very nice and accurate turn of mind—"of the exact number of three-story brick tenements in the city and county of New York. He wouldn't say how many there were, because he knew, and that was enough. Every brick tenement had its own voters—say three to each: very good. Around these were scattered a great many low-roofed wooden buildings. Three-stories was always commanding. Every three-story, that was his view, would carry three frame-houses with it to the polls. There was a calculation, and if Mr. Bluff wasn't the man, he had no more to say!"

And so this calculating prodigy sat down.

"Will the committee be cautious," followed a dark-looking member, with a low forehead, from which a shock of jet-black hair bristled and stood straight up, and a very harsh voice, "will they look out what they're at? Gallipot's a painter; there's no objection to that. He's a working man, and rolls back his sleeves when he's on a job. He has a right. Peleg Gallipot's a popular man—who says he isn't? What's the matter then? I know what's the matter—Gallipot, this Peleg Gallipot afore the committee, had lately painted a Presbyterian church! There was a snag; get over it if you can!"

To tell the truth, this was a snag; the friends of Gallipot felt that it was, and, for a time, the Bluffites had it all their own way. Here were the religious prejudices of the community, by a single act of the unfortunate Gallipot, arrayed in deadly hostility against him; all the other sects would go against him to a man. Gallipot had, in some unhappy moment of professional hallucination, painted a Presbyterian church. In this state of affairs the question was about to be put.

"Hold a minute, my excellent friends," said the very mild gentleman who had spoken once before. "Mr. Gallipot wishes to get upon his legs, and I hope you will allow him a chance. They need have no fears—they might put their minds at rest at once about a religious antipathy to Mr. Gallipot. It was true, and he felt it his duty to confess it, Mr. G. had painted a Presbyterian church a short time ago; it was also true, and he felt great pleasure in being able to make the statement, Mr. G. was now also under contract to paint an Episcopal church, also a Quaker meeting-house, also a Unitarian chapel. There was an antidote; and now, the sooner they went into an election, the better he and other friends of the poor man's candidate (as he would venture to call his worthy friend) would like it!"

Notwithstanding another last desperate attempt on the part of Mr. Cutbill's champion to

press the claims of that philanthropist on their attention, they did go into an election, and Gallipot was the man. The announcement of this result was hailed by the friends of Gallipot in the committee, with shouts and stamping; and as soon as it was made known below, where they had been kept throughout the evening in a state of feverish excitement by the contradictory reports of various members, who had dropped down into the tap-room from time to time, by similar demonstrations.

During all these deliberations, harangues, and ballottings of the convention, Puffer, under judicious advisement, had refrained from any public expression of his opinions; but, as an offset to this inactivity, had gone about the committee-room and declared himself privately, separately, and apart, to each member, in behalf of his candidate, and had taken great pains, when it came to a final and decisive ballot, to cast his vote—and to have it so known by his friends, in favor of Gallipot, the strongest man. When the committee was dismissed, to avoid troublesome questionings or reproaches, Puffer escaped as swiftly as he could, not even tarrying to interchange a word with Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, who, somewhat discomfited by the sudden rebuff he had met, pushed his way, as stately as ever, through the crowd in the bar-room, not deigning speech or recognition to a solitary soul.

Did not thought of the kind old man enter Puffer's mind as he departed from Fogfire hall? No thought of the first strange interview, the kind counsel, the anxious look? It did; and Puffer dwelt upon it till it all rose up anew before him, bright and fresh as the reality. Out of the past—the brief but eventful interval—the old man came shambling forth with the old gait, the sidelong demeanor, the one eye closed and the other fixed upon him. He walked by Puffer's side all the way home to the Fork; and when sleep and darkness again closed upon him, again the little paralytic crossed and re-crossed before him in tears and laughter; and was, finally lost in a deep gloom, which compassed him in and shut him from the sight.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### CERTAIN DISTINGUISHED PERSONS NEGOTIATE WITH THE NEWSBOYS.

THE two parties, it was now quite obvious, were rapidly approaching the field of encounter. Both were on the alert for recruits; busy at the drum, keeping up such uproar as they could; summoning meetings; despatching spies to the opposite camp; in a word, availing themselves of every opening to obtain an advantage over the adversary. Among other schemes, it was thought expedient to secure, as early as possible, the services of a corps of bold, active, and ready-witted bill-posters, who would not only

come in aid of the Bottom Club and other fraternities of that class, in laying waste and ravaging the enemy's placards, but also serve, by their ingenuity and vigor, to give prominence and conspicuous display to their own calls and handbills.

On this service Mr. Fishblatt and Puffer Hopkins, as combining great readiness of invention, with handsome powers of persuasion, were named; and Puffer, accordingly, one evening called by appointment on his associate, to set out with him on the performance of this delicate duty.

Mr. Fishblatt was discovered, as might perhaps have been expected, in his high-backed chair, in nearly the same attitude as before, with an immense newspaper—it was larger than the other, and had sprung up in the interval—in his outstretched arms; his feet braced against the wall, and ranging with his eye up and down the long columns of solid print, like a dragoon under demoniacal possession. It was a little time before Puffer's entrance caught his attention; but when it did, he sprang suddenly to his feet, welcomed him, and spreading the great sheet over a horse by the fire—which contrivance he had been driven upon by the extraordinary expansion of the weekly press—said he would be ready in a trice.

"A wonderful age this," said Mr. Fishblatt, while in the act of enduing his long brown overcoat, "an astonishing, an immense age; all the ages that have gone before it, should be counted as nothing, sir, and this year, this very year of our Lord, should be called the year one. We do our ancestors too much honor by keeping any accounts with them. We should cut them at once; deny any knowledge of them. They were a poor, mean, miserable set of sneaking folio-readers; do you know that? The editor of this paper, sir," pursued Mr. Fishblatt, grasping a sturdy stick that stood in a corner, "is a wonderful man. His sheet is two inches longer and four inches broader than any other in the country; he always has news an hour and three quarters in advance of the regular mail; and he has lately—there's enterprise for you—purchased a small blood money to ride down to the office with his leaders. It's astonishing to think what a popularity this man enjoys; he's known from one end of the country to the other, and gives us a half column of notices of his paper every week, speaking of him—him individually—in the very handsomest terms. There's the Nauvoo 'Bludgeon' says he wields a trenchant and vigorous pen—yes sir, the Nauvoo 'Bludgeon' says that. Then the Potomac 'Trumpet' admits he has an unrivalled genius for the more elegant species of composition; and by the western 'Thunder-gust,' which has just come in, I see they allow him 'a penetrating eye and a remarkable talent for journalism.' He's a wonderful man; we must go." And forth they issued. They struck through the heart of the city for the quarter they were in quest of; Mr. Fishblatt, whenever

they passed through an obscure street, unbending a little and addressing his companion in a familiar tone, but as soon as ever they were abroad again in a great thoroughfare, he stretched himself to his full stature, and marched forward very gravely, without so much as uttering a word. From the manner in which he wielded the cane that he bore in his hand—sometimes twirling it about in his fingers, sometimes making a home-thrust at an imaginary object just before him—he may have been employed in revolving a passage or two of declamation; anyhow, so they walked on. An old dingy building soon stood before them and they knew they had reached their destination. The quarter in which they had arrived was gross, squalid, and unclean, and the building itself seemed a natural production of the soil, and not the work of human hands. A broad gaping area was there, in which such other fungi of the place as broken quarter-kegs, stocking-ends, and shattered hats, lay in heaps about, and into this they plunged.

They descended a few steps, and, by the aid of a flickering lamp, getting into an unclean passage, the walls of which were embellished with numerous impressions of small hands taken in primitive earth, they reached a door from which a great hubbub of voices and confused sounds constantly escaped. Here they entered, and found themselves in a low-roofed apartment lighted by various glittering and resplendent reflectors pinned against the upright posts at the side; around the whole room there was a narrow bench, and at the farther extremity was a desk several feet above the level of the floor. Puffer and his companion were ushered to a place by the side of the desk; a tall young gentleman, who seemed to act as president, or chairman, stood up and knocked on the board before him, in imitation of a popular tune, when there came pouring in at a side passage, which Puffer had not at first observed, a swarm of youths, of all sizes, ages, and complexions; dressed in all possible varieties of apparel; and bearing themselves with as great freedom and independence of demeanor as any number of gentlemen that could be found. Many of them bore in their hands threepenny pies, out of which, from time to time, they cut a mouthful; many more carried cigars in the corners of their mouths, at which they puffed with an exemplary vehemence and unction. At another bidding they were all seated, or gathered in groups and clusters about pillars in the middle of the apartment, and pausing for a season in their respective labors, turned their faces toward the tall chairman.

"Ge'mmen!" said the chief of the news-boys, rising in his place, having first priggishly buttoned his coat and thrust a broken yellow handkerchief in his breast, "Ge'mmen!" said he, "we all knows what we've come here for to-night. You know, Tom Hurley, and Joe Shirks, and Bill Gidney, what we're come here for to do. We all knows what a low ebb

'Mery-kin literature had got to, when we took hold of it. We all knows what it is now—the wery pride and ornament of the earth. I can say it of a truth, ge'mmen, that Bill Gidney, the activest news-boy in the metropolis, is a honor to his species, so is Joe Shirks, and so is Tom Hurley. Where was natyve genius afore we took hold of it? it was a bud in the worm, a undeveloped onion. What's the complaint now? There's too much genius, too much surprisin' talent, and keen observation, and over-powerin' eloquence. King Solomon and the greasy wise men 'ud be ashamed o' themselves if they only knew Mr. Flabby, what edits the 'Empty Puncheon,' or Mr. Busts, what conducts the 'Daily Bladder,' or Mr. Bloater, what writes four-house leaders for the 'Junk Bottle,' but what's going to be the head man of the new and interestin' paper called the 'Mammoth Mug.' That'll be a remarkable paper, gemmen, depend on it! The uncommon quantity of brains put into that newspaper will be mere waste; it'll be a extravagant usin' up o' the human intellect. For myself, ge'mmen, if you ask my views of liter-a-toor, I don't hesitate to say, in one sense o' the word, excuse the expression, it's nothin' but a powerful combination o' rags and brass; by which I means to say it takes a uncommon quantity o' rags to make the paper out of, and it takes a uncommon sight o' brass and courage to make the paper full o' reading matter. Now what's our duty? Shall we give the cause of natyve genius the go-by; a sort of a wink to a blind horse, instead of a nice nod of encouragement? As long as we can make twenty-five off a hundred, and lunches, shall we give it up?"

Here the speaker was interrupted by a terrific and general cry of "No, no." "Carry that man to Bellewue, he's lost his wits!"

It was quite obvious that his excellency, the chairman, was prepared still further to thrill and enlighten them with his peculiar eloquence; but at this stage of the proceedings there came into the meeting, pushing his way through the news-boys, with the most easy, natural, and serene self-possession, a stout, blustering fellow, with great staring eyes—not altogether ill-looking either—a red neckerchief about his throat, a frock-coat flaunting from his side, his hair in disorder, and his countenance beaming with a broad unrestrained expression of assurance and conceit. This was an editor. It was Piddleton Bloater himself; and Piddleton Bloater, the mighty, the immense, the immeasurable, had come to bargain with the news-boys to take an interest in a new journal in which he was about to embark his magnificent talents.

"The new paper to be issued on Saturday morning," said Mr. Bloater, looking gigantic, so as to overawe the juvenile gentry before him, "will be the completest paper ever published; eight feet square, honest measure; illustrated by the most splendid wood-cuts, head-pieces, tail-pieces, and so forth, by the most celebrated

artists. Correspondents in every quarter of the world. We have already engaged Commissioner Lin for the Chinese department; President Boyer, of Hayti, does the African branch. The board of directors of the N. Y. Gas company are retained as regular contributors. Mr. Bulfinch Twaddle will furnish a poem to every number. We expect to have a circulation of one hundred and fifty thousand by the end of the present year; in fact we have it already, although they haven't all paid in yet. We intend to make the 'Mug' the most remarkable journal of the day. The 'Mug' must go. Don't all speak at once!"

Here the orator produced from his coat-pocket a great red handkerchief, the duplicate segment of that about his neck, which he unfurled with a flourish, and disclosed before the gaze of the assembled news-boys, the words "THE MAMMOTH MUG—Edited by PIDDLETON BLOATER, Esq.," wrought thereon in portentous capitals. This movement was hailed with a cheer, and as he waved it about his head, and reddened in the face by the exertion, the cheers grew in energy and emphasis.

"But, gentlemen," continued Mr. Bloater, when the enthusiasm had a little abated, sinking his voice to an awful whisper, "there's a secret I've got to disclose that will astonish you. Prepare yourselves. Brace up, and hold fast of each other. Rum-fusti, the patriarch of Jerusalem, is employed to write an entirely original continuous tale for the 'Mug,' to be contributed exclusively to the 'Mug' and to no other paper!"

This had a fine sounding style, and the news-boys, from the very circumstance of not apprehending it very thoroughly, cheered and shouted more heartily than ever. With this tremendous announcement Mr. Piddleton Bloater paused, and taking a note-book from his pocket said he was ready for orders, but hoped they would restrain themselves, and not come on too fast.

"Eight feet square, that's ever so many thousand surface inches!" said Master Tom Hurley, a pale-faced news-boy appparelled in a long tailed coat with metal buttons. "I'm death for the 'Mug,' Mr. Bloater. I'll cut the 'Empty Puncheon,' and take a hundred 'Mugs' to start with."

"The Puncheon! How in the name of Heaven could any one patronize that miserable abortion!" exclaimed Mr. Bloater. "Flabby's a poor withered alligator, and the Puncheon a mere 'pothecary's show-bottle, that shines a mile or two off, but's nothing after all but colored water, and that not fit to drink."

"If Rum Buster out o' Noah's ark writes for the first number," said Master Gidney, a small, corpulent, jolly-looking fellow, in a roundabout and tasselled cap, grinning and speaking up as he cocked it on his brow, "I'll cut in for a gross of number one; if I seed his Tale's name in big letter on the fences, it 'ud give me con-

fidence, and I might go in for a couple o' hundred; but that's as many as 'ud do, till I have a interview with the fireboard makers."

Mr. Bloater, not exactly understanding how a privy of knowledge between the fireboard makers and Master Gidney could affect the sale of the Mug, looked upon the youth approvingly, and dashed his open palm upon his leg, crying out that was "juicy and just the thing!"

"I think Busts, of the 'Daily Bladder,' is breaking down," interposed another news-vender, in a suit all shreds and patches, with an unclean face, uncombed hair (the prevailing fashion of the place), and no covering to his head. "He writes all his editorials in a cheer made out of the staves of a rum-cask. He loves the smell of the thing wonderfully; and has to be tied in by the foreman while he's writin'. Busts writes a history of his spees over-night in somebody else's name, and that fills up the police head. I'll take fifty 'Mugs,' fresh and bright with the froth on."

"The best thing you can do, my lad!" cried Mr. Bloater, from where he stood, smiling. "That Busts is a poor miserable wretch; a viler in the uniform of the rifle brigade, and he kills character by the platoon. They call Busts a keen observer of life! so he is, of animalculæ that live in the kennel. There isn't a viler wretch on the face of the earth than this same Busts, if you except Flabby, of the 'Empty Puncheon!' But how many copies do you take, Mr. Chairman?" asked Mr. Bloater, turning toward that functionary; "I know you to be one of the longest-legged and loudest-voiced of the society."

"That's a very delicate question, sir," answered the president, rising with dignity, and buttoning his coat calmly as he ascended, "a very delicate question—unless I was informed of the principles the Mug's to be conducted on; does it go Captain Kidd or the moral code?"

"Captain Kidd, decidedly," rejoined Mr. Piddleton Bloater. "We shall pirate all foreign tales regularly; and where we can purloin proof-sheets shall publish in advance of the author himself; shall in all cases employ third-rate native writers at journeyman cobbler's wages, and swear to their genius as a matter of business; shall reprint the old annuals and almanacs, systematically, as select extracts and facetiæ, and shall reproduce their cuts and illustrations, as new designs from the burin of Mr. Tinto, the celebrated engraver."

"That'll do—that'll do!" cried the chairman, interrupting the speaker. "Set me down for the balance of the first edition; it'll be a fast-rate paper and conducted on fast-rate principles."

"There's another thing," said Mr. Bloater, continuing the subject, "another thing to be distinctly and clearly understood. Whoever writes the chief article of the Mug is to be the great writer—the biggest penman in America, for that week. For instance, if it should even

be Busts or Flabby, Flabby is to be advertised as an angel, in large caps, and Busts as a genius of the first water."

"Of course!" cried the president, "of course!" echoed the newsboys to a man, who understood this policy thoroughly.

"With this understanding I'll say good night to you," said Mr. Bloater, wiping his brow. "I hope you'll be in good voice for the first day; I'd suggest a little practice in crying false alarms for a night or two, the length of half a dozen streets."

"We does that regularly," answered Master Joe Shirks, "and some of us goes on amateur duty as oyster-boys, when shellfish's in season, and big enough to cry."

With this satisfactory assurance, Mr. Piddleton Bloater departed, sounding the natural trumpet of his nose with all his might as he went.

"Who knows but some of these youth," asked Mr. Fishblatt, who had been thrown into temporary shade by the presence of so astounding a genius, wheeling about and looking Puffer full in the face, "may come to serve their country one of these days in the halls of legislation? Who knows but Nature may be unconsciously training in the crier of a 'Junk Bottle,' a future speaker of the house? or in the street-shouter of the 'Empty Puncheon,' a leading congressional orator? I begin to think it's the true training for rhetorical talent; and why should not their ambition be turned in this direction? My young friends and Mr. President," he continued, elevating his voice, now that he was fairly roused, and falling back a step or two, "to return to what I was about to say when interrupted by Mr. Bloater, I would put it to your patriotism, whether you should not withdraw for a time from the literary luxury of crying the news, and take an active part in public affairs. Here is a noble opportunity to serve your country, my young friends: don't let it pass. Gidney, and Shirks, and Hurley—for such I understand to be the names of some of you—have now an enviable opportunity of achieving lasting glory. Think of it; you may save your country; the conspicuous exhibition of a placard by your ingenuity, may draw to the polls, say only a single voter, that voter casts for Gallipot, and the business is done. Give up everything to serve your country, abandon your cherished pursuits, sacrifice your feelings, and endeavor yourselves to all the good and virtuous and public-spirited throughout this great metropolis—this mighty nation!"

"For my part," responded Mr. Gidney, who was the first to rise, "I considers it degradin' for a newsboy to become a bill-sticker; it's lower-un' oneself in the scale of society and makin' a object of himself for all future times and generations. The voice of fame is agin it."

"You are wrong, my young friend," continued Mr. Fishblatt, rising again, majestically, stretching out his right hand and depositing it on the desk top, while he passed his left behind

his person, and thrust it in one of the nether pockets of his coat. "The vocation of a bill-sticker is a highly honorable one, and admits of a great expansion of natural talent. What does he do? Why, Mr. Chairman, he makes dumb walls and dead stones speak; he puts a tongue in the old thirsty street-pump; and he causes shutters and bulk-heads to cry aloud and shout out, at all hours, day and night—night and day. Isn't that enough? Where do you find the bill-sticker? Why, he's at the bottom, the very prime mover and getter-up of all public gatherings, concerts, lectures, ballooning, ballottings, packet-sailings, fairs, shows, and spectacles. He's the prompter and bell-puller of society. Isn't this an honorable calling? Why, sir, next to the popular preacher and the popular author, the bill-sticker is certainly the greatest benefactor of his race!"

As soon as Mr. Fishblatt had taken his seat, after this powerful outbreak, Master Joe Shirks rose to reply.

"We can't do it—no how," said Master Shirks, addressing the chair. "We are pledged contrarywise to the citizens of New York. What'll they say, I'd like to know, when you, Mr. Chairman, and I, and Bill Gidney here, loses our voice, and cry no more papers than if we was dumb-fish and flounders. Papers must be cried; and there's the extras—who's to know anything about that 'ere sudden murder, where a affectionate husband has chopped his wife into tender-loins with a new broad-axe? Or that 'ere dreadful case of explosion, where the benevolent gentleman has called a tea-party over his steamboat-boiler, and blowed 'em all to atoms, with gitting the fun and the jollication up too high? What's to become of these little things, sir, if we go off duty? It's easy to see, without a telyscop, or a constable's peepers, the city 'ud have a shock of the apoplexy, and go into fits regularly till we begun to cry again. The newsboys, sir—and we all knows it, but we're too modest to say it out of doors—is the moral lamplighters of this 'ere city. The ge'mman talks about public affairs; that's a good 'un, as if we didn't keep the public mind straight about all that 'ere! If the Englishers go up into the bowels of China, and drink up all the old hyson, that's been laid away there, drying and gitting strength for four hundred year, I guess we knows it! What's the use of all our private interviews with the pressmen and clerks about extras, if it don't come to that? By private advices we learns that the Florida Indians all waded in a body into a large swamp, and committed soo-cide by holding each other's heads under water, on the nineteenth instant; where do you get all that from, old fellow?—why, from newsboy Tom, or newsboy Bill, or Joe Shirks, your servant. I'm agin the motion, Mr. Cheerman, and move we stick to *our* business and lets everybody else stick to theirs!"

Another young gentleman followed who couldn't think of the proposition, as he had



been assured, from good sources, that there were to be four powerful extras issued in the course of the month, containing a vast deal of inflammable information in advance of all the regular packets, steamers, and stages; and, for his part, he wouldn't lose the chance. Theatre-money was low in his pocket, he hadn't seen a mellow-drama for a week, and it was asking too much of him.

Another was willing to do all *he* could to forward the proposition; but he'd like to know why the gem'men didn't stick the bills himself; he seemed to have good legs of his own, and a very respectable pair of reachers. At this suggestion the chairman cried "order," and there was a general shout of disapprobation at the line of questioning adopted by the young gentleman.

After a pretty thorough discussion of the subject, when no satisfactory result seemed possible, the chairman himself arose.

"Ge'mmen!" said he, "This'll never do. These ge'mmen come to us with the very highest recommendations, and from the very most respectable quarters. We musn't let 'em go away without a lift. We can help 'em, and we must. Now there is in this very meeting, and I'm not afraid to say it, certain young gentlemen that had better go to be bill-stickers afore their healths is ruined and entirely broken up. There's one of us—I don't mention names, ge'mmen—that bursted his voice on extra Junks last week; he was entirely too wioleent on the China question. His voice is gone. Then there's another of us—you recollect him, ge'mmen—who broke down (there was a sight for you) in the very middle of the street, with a very exciting number of the 'Puncheon' (containing all them pleasant particulars about the two dead bodies found in a gen'leman's iron safe) under his arm, tryin' to do justice to it. How many victims of weto messages there is in this room I wouldn't like to say; but I do know that a weto message from the presidin' chief of these United States and a influenza, is equally fatal to the voice of the newsboy. Then there's you, Ikey Larkins," continued the chairman, addressing a lumbering, overgrown fellow that stood shouldering a post in the corner; "haven't I told you more nor twenty times that you'r beyond the newsboy age. It's immoral of such a veteran as you to be cryin' papers about New York streets; don't you see that you're too big a build, that your'e lame of one leg and short of an eye; and yet you will keep hanging about the offices, and cutting in as if you was born to the business. Ge'mmen, let's give Mr. Fishblatt six to begin with (Ikey Larkins for one), and throw 'em in one day as fast as they break down. It's carried!"

And in this summary gave the mission of Puffer Hopkins and Mr. Fishblatt was accomplished, and amid an uproar of cries, among which they heard above all others "Three cheers for the cheer!" and "Ikey Larkins is a extra foolish!"—they left.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

STRANGE MATTER; PERHAPS NOT WITHOUT METHOD.

AT early morning—the very hour, or nearly so, when Puffer Hopkins was holding an interview with the two women—an aged figure, wild and distracted, wandered about the fields beyond the city. His steps were uncertain and his whole look and action full of confusion and doubt; he seemed to be seeking something that was not to be found, and wherever he cast his eyes, wondered that it was not there. Where he had passed the night, God only knows; but now that it was morning, he came abroad, drenched, disordered in dress, and wavered and groped about in the clear sunshine as if it had been mist. Bewildered and with troubled steps, he crossed the low hollows and meadows; straggled more perplexed than ever through a crowded orchard; and at length stood on an ancient highway, the old Post Road. The moment his steps touched the road they seemed on a familiar track; his look brightened, and with a gleaming countenance he glanced about, till his eye fell on an old faded country house. What joyful and happy gleams broke through the old man's features as he looked upon that old faded house! His eyes sparkled, his hands trembled for joy, and he raised them up and stretched them forth as if he could grasp that building, as a familiar friend, by an outstretched hand. Then the brightness passed away from his look, he was deeply moved, and in his agitation could scarcely drag himself to the spot where his eyes were fixed. With trembling hand he lifted the latchet of the gate; and as he walked up the path he shook like one in a spasm.

Many times he walked round and round the house before he entered. Then he went to the rear, raised a door that led to a ground cellar, and peered for a long space down into the gloom of the earth before he would descend. Through heaps of lumber, old decaying casks, and other ancient fragments, he picked his way; holding his breath and spreading out his arms before him. He soon found stairs that led into the upper chambers, and climbing these, he was in an apartment all dust and darkness, still as death, barren and silent as the grave itself. He paused and listened, as if he expected the approach of some well-known tread; the greeting, perhaps, of a familiar voice. No voice answered—how could it at that lapse of time, unless it had lingered in the corners and recesses of the chamber, years after its owner was laid in the earth?

"Shall I let the morning light in upon all these?" said the old man, who called up in his mind a vivid image of all that this chamber held; "not yet; I think I could not bear it yet! I know that broad day is without," he felt it more because of the darkness, "but I dare not let it in this chamber yet."

With this he moved about the apartment, touching everything with his hand—gently and kindly as a blind man, features and faces he would know—until he had gone through every article about the room, save one, and that was a chair—a simple, old-fashioned armchair, that stood by the hearth. He many times approached this as if he would know it as he had known whatever else was there; but his heart gave out and he fell back, leaning, in the darkness, against whatever chanced to be nearest.

Wrought upon by his own fancy and these acts of association, finding these many endeavors to no purpose, he rushed to a window, burst its hasp, and casting its shutters wide back, turned about and straining his gaze upon the empty chair by the hearth, he fell down like one in a fit.

Recovering, when the mid-day began to pour its warm beams into the chamber, he looked about the apartment, dwelling for a long time on each object; but when his eye fell on a door which led into a small chamber in one corner of the room, a change came over his countenance, and he turned aside as if he dared not look that way again. Presently, however, and seemingly moved thereto by some sudden impulse, he proceeded to the door, which was closed, drew it open, and clutching the door-post to hold him up, he leaned forward and looked within. There was nothing there but a narrow truckle-bed with a single tattered blanket upon it, and the cords, such as were visible, mouldering and dragging upon the floor; and yet what a shuddering horror crossed the old man's face as he gazed upon it, how he trembled and bore heavily against the door-post, as if he had been smitten blind and helpless by the shock of a sudden blow.

He could neither enter nor retire, but stood there like one rooted to the earth. His mind was dwelling on what had passed there twenty years before; a little hideous old man, older than himself, lay, shivering under that blanket—he saw every line of his countenance—resting on his elbow, straining his ear to catch what passed in the neighboring chamber, and chuckling like a fiend, as he listened.

Consciousness and some power of motion by degrees came back; he went away and sat down for a time, lost in a deep revery; then he rose, and going forward cautiously, as if under the horrible belief that that other old man was lying in wait within—he closed the door, turned the key in the lock which groaned aloud, and caused him to start; placed a chair with its back against the door, dropped into the seat and fixed his eyes, as if he would never remove them thence, upon the old armchair standing by the hearth. Sometimes he wept as he looked there; then smiled, as if he would cheer some one that filled its seat; and then a keen anguish, an imploring look—full of sharp desolation—shot into every feature, and blinded his eyes with grief.

In this way he sat there for an hour or more,

suffering with pangs that spake aloud in every line of his face, every muscle of his tortured old body—but immovable. He strained his eyes forward—"She is going—God help us all—she is gone!" he cried, and broke from the chamber. He speeded swiftly into the hall; unfastened the door—the old bar crumbled as he pulled it down—and was in the open air. Much as he was moved, his feet yet lingered about the place; and while he wavered in his mind whether to stay or fly—standing and looking by turns back upon the house and out upon the road that stretched away into the country—his attention was fixed by a young figure that approached. It was a fair creature that he saw, not yet grown to the full age of care; but, nevertheless, pale, travel-stained, and partly borne down by a burden (it was a plain willow basket) which she carried, and which she held close to her side.

She was hurrying by when the old man accosted her.

"Stop me not, for Heaven's sake, stop me not!" she cried, as Hobbleshank stood in her way. "Life and death are in my steps. Death behind and death before me, and life only—a little lingering life—in such speed as I may make. I must be gone at once!"

The old man stood, for a time, gazing at the pale young creature, and wondering what her meaning might be. Recovering from his surprise, he presently laid his hand in hers (which was cold as marble), and said:

"Come in with me, you are sick and weary—that you can not deny—with long travel. You need rest, and may find a little here. I once had a good right to say to all comers, 'Welcome here!'—that was many, many long dreary years ago—it was then a cheerful, merry house; and now, we who are both stricken in sorrow, have a privilege anywhere where darkness is, and dust, and lonely gloom. Come in and rest."

As he spake, he drew her gently toward the house. She hesitated at first, and when she cast her eyes up at the old building, shuddered, and started back as if it had been a prison; but when she turned and saw tears streaming in the old man's eyes—he had watched her with a sad constancy—she smiled sorrowfully, and at once entered in.

Why did she pause as she paced that broad old hall? What were those crumbling old walls, and those fading figures, painted to the ceiling, saying to her? She looked about like one restored to a world she had known before, and could not tell where nor when. Wondering more and more, and on the watch at every step, like one that looks for a surprise, she was led by Hobbleshank, whose steps seemed moved that way by a force he could not control, into the chamber where he had suffered so much. He would have closed the door behind them, to shut off the cold airs that dwelt about the hall.

"In God's name!" cried his young compan-



ion, "do not shut this chamber up so tight, you will stifle me. I had rather suffer all the unkindness of winter than see anything more of closed doors and darkened windows. I have seen enough already!" She looked uneasily about as she spake, sighed as in spite of herself, and was silent.

"You have had heavy troubles, for one so young," said the old man, "I know you have, for your eyes seem to be looking not at present objects, but on what is behind and far away!"

"Don't speak of them now," she answered, drawing her breath short and fast; "but go out and look back upon the road, whether any travellers are coming; this way in great haste. There will be a dark, deadly carriage close behind them."

Hobbleshank begged her to be seated, and went forth as she requested. He soon came back and answered that there were none to be seen.

"I strained my gaze," said the old man, "the whole length of the road. Be comforted, there is no one in pursuit."

"In pursuit!" she answered, lifting her eyes upon him with a broad look of surprise and wonder, "then you know that I have fled; do you know from whom?"

"How could I fail to know?" answered Hobbleshank, whose heart softened toward the gentle questioner; "you have fled from tyrants. I see no stripes upon your person; you do not wear a prison-garb; and yet I will swear that you are flying from the most cursed, cruel, relentless despotism, that could be laid on a young spirit like yours. Some one that may have spared your fair flesh, has been cutting your young heart to the quick—has been breaking your beautiful hopes, one by one; and you feel the sunshine and the free air to day, for the first time, perhaps, in many a long year. Give an old man credit for some spirit of sorrowful judgment, and say I am right."

Could the earnest truth with which Hobbleshank spake, out of the very bosom of a great inner world of sorrow in himself, fail to touch the other pale sufferer?

"I have had some troubles," she answered, feigning to smile. "But what of that? I am only grown old a little before my time. I will try to forget what is past; would God grant me strength to bear up against what is to come!" As she uttered this, a deadly paleness blanched her cheeks, and her eyes brightened into a vague splendor, that was almost fearful to look upon.

The old man sat fixed in his seat, gazing upon her; while there came floating into his mind, and assuming form and color, as he watched her haggard look, her features white as the tombstone marble, and her thin, trembling form, the memory of one just so troubled, shrunken, and sorrowful, that faded away from that old armchair a lifetime ago.

Each lost in their own wandering and troubled thoughts, they sat there dumb and silent as two images in a cold vault.

"Do you dwell here?" she said at length; but seeing the dusty walls, from which the hangings tumbled piecemeal, and how dull cobwebs had engrossed the corners of the room, she added, "but I know you can not."

"And yet I do," answered Hobbleshank, "in the spirit. My mind has lived in these chambers for many years; but this poor old body drags itself along in yonder city. This house is mine, and yet not mine; rather it belongs to a child of mine, whether in his grave or no, I can not tell."

"Then he may be happy!" she said. "I have looked down into many graves, and used to think them dreary. But now I know there are graves on the earth gloomier than any dug in the soil. Why do I stay here, talking so, when I should be abroad on my journey? I would not have tarried—though I am glad for your sake and my own, now, that I did—had I not wished, most fervently wished, to cross the threshold of the city with some strength and spirit to meet my task. I must go."

She rose, possessed herself of the willow basket, which she had laid on the ground at her side, and took the old man by the hand.

"I am sorry that you go," he said, looking kindly upon the gentle creature. "You know not what guests and fancies you leave me to. Can I go with you to the great city in no friendly service?"

"In none whatever, I fear," she answered. "My task is a simple one, and asks only a kindly spirit to fill it well. I go to tend at the bedside of a dear friend who is sick. I must hasten, or he may have bid the world goodbye already. I think," she added, laying her pale white hand upon the basket, "I have some comfort here for him."

"An old man's good wishes shall go with you every step! Cheer up, and speed, then, if such be your errand: the city darkens apace, and I shall be alone again, as I have been, and shall be, how long Heaven knows."

He led her through the old broad hall; she looked at the dim old figures with the same strange interest as before; and in a moment they stood upon the door-step.

"Remember," said Hobbleshank, "though we have met but once, we are old friends."

She pressed his hand closely in her own, and proceeded on her way. Once forth upon the road again, she strained her eyes with painful earnestness toward the city, as if she could so call up, out of all the great and turbid mass, the little bedside she wished to see; pausing only once or twice to look back at the old man, who at last fell within and closed the door.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE PALE TRAVELLER ENTERS THE CITY.

SHE had not walked far, when a sudden turn brought her where the road plunged down with

a swift declivity at her feet. She stopped and trembled. Underneath her troubled eye lay the mighty metropolis, with its thousand chimneys, its blackened roofs, its solemn church-turrets and glittering vanes—spreading out wherever she gazed, and filling her mind with an indescribable awe.

How dark, how cold and chill, seemed that multitude of houses to her! They suggested to her no thoughts of neighborhood and fellowship by their closeness, but rather one of dumb creatures huddled together by sheer necessity, to shut off the shivering airs that beset them from the rivers on either side. When she looked for broad and cheerful ways, and found only narrow streets that yawned like chasms and abysses along the house-fronts; when her eyes sought waving trees to gladden the air, in vain, her heart shrunk within her: it seemed to her a wilderness of dungeons, and nothing more. A dark, dismal mist, formed of dust, smoke, the reek of squalid streets, the breath of thousands and hundred thousands of human beings—crept, like a black surge, along the housetops.

The hoarse murmur deepened as night drew on; the moaning of one vexed with pain and confinement, of prisoners pining to be free. If the whole broad shadow of the city, cold and vast, had fallen on her spirit, it could not have chilled her more; but when the thought came to her again of the sacred errand on which she was bound, her heart was renewed, her eye brightened, and, clasping her burden anew, she hurried on. And now the great city which she had wondered at, in its entirety and vastness, met her, part by part, and bewildered her with its countless details. There were country wagons hurrying out; sulkeys, stanhopes, barouches, flying past as if desolation followed fast behind. Then great carts and trucks, loaded to the peak with heavy merchandise. All these she regarded with a wandering eye; but when she caught sight of dark foundation-stones, still clinging to the earth, where an old penitentiary had been lately razed to the ground—she felt the uses it had served.

Whenever she passed houses with closed shutters, she shuddered and quickened her pace; to some there were barred windows—these she regarded with a sidelong glance of curiosity, as if she expected to see pale faces peering out between the irons. Once she passed an old stone building, with every casement from cellar to garret closely ironed; it was only an old sugar-house, and she speeded past it as if it had been a jail.

Full of vague fears, startled at every object that crossed her, suggestive in any the remotest degree of that she dreaded, and had good cause to dread the most—she hastened on. A green wagon, close and dark, passed her—the prison carriage, plying between the city prison and the island—and she felt it like a cloud as it hurried by. The very streets, murky as they were, seemed to close upon her in the distance,

but opened again constantly as she advanced; new houses, new sights and objects, springing, as from a perpetual womb, out of the cloudy haze that lowered in her way. As far as her eye could pierce, the roads were dark with vehicles of one sort and another, crossing and recrossing, rushing tumultuously in every direction; some driven by boys, some by men; some sitting under shelter; others, the cartmen standing up in their professional frocks, with a firm hold upon the reins, darting rapidly from one side of the street to the other. Above the whole throng and procession, a great coach or stage at times towered up, over-topping the street, and swarming to its very summit with passengers.

All along the way, people poured into the streets in uninterrupted succession, out of damp, dull rooms; out of narrow alleys; from work-shops; from cellars; from churches; and the way was perpetually choked and glutted with the throng. What multitudes went past pent up in carriages—a pleasure to them, a hideous bondage it seemed to her!

She saw no one, not one, with gyves and irons on their limbs; and yet, how care-worn, and bowed, and convict-like they all looked to her!

She passed along, looking anxiously at dark doorways, at iron gates and steep areas, and heavy churches oppressing the earth with their massive granite or marble; smithies, where men were busy forging vast chains and cables; shops, where great locks and bolts leaned in the windows. A long way after all these, she came upon a grim, ill-dressed, smoke-stained man, who bore in his hand a bunch of keys, which he grasped close and clashed together as he walked; and she shrunk from him as if he had been the deadliest and fastest of all the jailer race. Gazing fearfully about in this way, she espied far off, through a side street, dimly seen moving through the dusk that grew every minute deeper, a hearse and funeral train—at that distance it seemed scarcely more than a shadow, and a cold shudder crept through her frame. What if it were her friend, her dear friend, whose burial she thus regarded? Her first impulse was to hasten after it; but ere she had taken many steps in this resolution, it had glided away, and she returned to the path she had been pursuing. Night now came swiftly on; the black shadows fell in broad masses in the streets; the confusion, the hurry, the press of life in every direction deepened.

She moved along as speedily as she could, consulting from time to time, at a window lamp, a chart she had borne in her hand all along. At intervals, as if by chance and no design, a public light broke out, sometimes in one quarter, sometimes in another, and glimmered with a feeble ray. This only made the gloom deeper and drearier than before; and she kept, while she could, in the streets where the shop-windows blazed upon the pavement.

It was not easy for her, with all her care, her painful scrutiny of the paper she carried, and study of the signboards at the corners, to shape her course aright. There was a street-fight once; then a crowd gathered at the door of a show; then a poor woman who was doling forth, from the steps of a gentleman's domicile, a piteous tale of poverty and suffering. Once there was a hideous cry, a light rose high in the air, and she looked about and saw, more plainly than ever, how darkness had stretched his mighty arms abroad and held the city in his grasp.

Not a whit fairer or freer did the houses show to her now at night, than when she first beheld them, and ever since; they all seemed like graves, or tombs, or prison-fastnesses. Striking through thoroughfares that diverged from the main path she had been travelling, she was gradually approaching the point she sought. She passed a thoroughfare, little frequented, where the unfed lamps winked and blinked at each other across the street, like so many decayed ghosts. Then another, where all the lights had gone out. Then others; until at length, by what she saw around, she felt that the object of her wish was near at hand.

There was a square, so her chart informed her; here it was—a discolored yellow house; here too—only it seemed more golden and precious than the description allowed; and there—yes, there, where her eyes were fixed, as on a star, shone a little light, just at the height she might have looked for. The house, the home, the shelter of her sick friend was found. The door stood open to receive and welcome her. She looked around; the tall houses that guarded the square, growing blacker every minute, seemed frowning on her and gathering about her, closer and closer, as if they would shut her in: she glanced timidly up to them, as if they had been in truth cruel living creatures, and, trembling with fear and joy, fled into the house for shelter, like one pursued.

## CHAPTER XX.

### FOB AND HIS VISITER FROM THE COUNTRY.

THE stairs were steep and narrow; and as she clambered up, a thousand visions thronged about her and crowded in her way. At one time she was oppressed with the gloomy thought that *he* might be dead and gone; not to be found any more in that house, or any other of mortal habitation. Then all the great city, in the many dreadful and oppressive shapes it had taken in her mind, whirled past, filling the air with darkness, and confusion, and boundless tumult. It was a gloomy way for a poor lonely woman to travel—that ill-arranged stairway—lighted only by the chance flickering of cheap candles, where the doors stood ajar; or by whatever of the public light strayed in through

the entry windows. Every step brought her nearer to the chamber she sought; and although there were many others under that same roof, children, and women, and aged men, dwelling in many apartments (for they were all poor, and poverty straitens itself to a narrow fold), she seemed to know that chamber only, among them all.

At length she stood at the door; she knew it, even in the dark, as her hand passed over it; she paused a moment, to gather strength and spirit. While she lingered in a deep conflict of many emotions, she thought she heard the murmur of gentle music within; it was fancy, only, associating with the place an incident that raised it out of its low estate. She entered; there was the room, lighted by a single candle, gleaming from the corner where it stood, as cramped and narrow as ever; the asparagus in bottles; the chain of birds' eggs against the wall; the pot of plants brought in and stationed on the shelf; the blackbird in his cage, removed from his old lookout at the window and hung upon a beam inside; and underneath these, where his waking eye could command them all, lay the little tailor, poor, wan, wasted with sickness, and slumbering from very want of strength. She looked upon him, scarcely believing it was he; she looked upon the objects which carried her mind far away, and she knew it was, indeed, no other. She sank into a chair by the wall, and looked around. How strong was the sympathy of her fancy with the fancy of the sick man! While she gazed upon them, the room broadened into wide meadows; the asparagus-sprigs shot up into fair, green trees; the birds' eggs, in the instant, swarmed with many beautiful and melodious lives; and the single blackbird darkened the air as if he had been a whole flock in himself. There was more freedom to her in that little room, than in all the broad streets she had wandered through.

Then she watched the sick man himself; so thin, so pale, he seemed to have come to her a long way out of the past, divested of all the clogs and shackles that had held him from her so long. He smiled; by that she knew him again. It was meant, she was sure, for herself; and her heart lightened at the thought. Dwelling upon it, remembering how often such a look had brightened that pale face in old days, her thoughts were led by degrees to the basket she had laid down at her side. Unclasping it with trembling hands, she brought from its bosom a slip of the wild-rose, which she carried gently and laid on the pillow by his brow, with the hope that it might suggest to his dreams scenes dear to him as life. She was right; mingling with his own willing thoughts, what his sense reported to him, there sprang up before him a fantasy of other days, so sweet, so life-like, so lively, that he smiled on it as if it had been reality. His lips moved, and murmured softly, as to a listening ear. She glided quickly forward, and bent down to catch what

he uttered. She would have given the world had his words—she thought she knew what they would say—been audible.

Presently the poor tailor wakened from his charmed slumber, sat up in his couch, and looked about. His eyes, which wandered as in search of something not present, no sooner fell on the pale visitor than they were fixed at once. So unreal they seemed to each other, and yet shadows of what both knew well, they sat gazing each into the other's eyes, without motion or utterance.

"Martha," at last said Fob, whispering the name, in doubt whether he would be answered, or whether the vision would be dispelled, "Martha Upland."

She started up and rushed to his bedside.

"I thank God for this!" she cried, casting herself upon his neck; "I had not hoped to see you alive!"

"You should scarcely think of the living," answered Fob, with an inexpressible anguish in his look; "you who have been dead and buried three long years."

"Little better than that," she observed, "or not so good. A close, silent bondage in one's father's house, with eyes, colder than the grave-worms, ever fixed on you; all the motions of nature going on about you, so that you can hear the murmur and not share it; on the same earth with friends you love, and yet sundered, in an everlasting parting from them, this is death. There can be no other, and no worse."

"I could not, dear Martha—it was madness for me to dream that you would come, or could, when I sent for you. I was going to the grave you have prayed for so often; and tarried only to shake hands and part."

"It was only by long watching, and at last, by stealth, that your message came to my hand. Yesterday at daybreak, the cruel guards who have watched me so long, grew, for once, drowsy with sleep; I found access to an upper chamber; clambered to the roof; down upon the old outhouse (you remember it well), and at length leaped to the ground. In an hour, an hour sacred to you, I was on my journey, and now, foot-weary, as you may guess, but glad of heart, I am here."

"Three years—what years—since the awful interdiction that divided us was pronounced. It was folly that I, a poor, outcast, landless tailor, should lift my heart to you; but, with God's blessing, what I then gave has prospered (I know it has) in your silent prison, as well as it would with all the summer's sun and the autumn's bounty shed upon it. Three years; and now I look upon what my eyes have wandered through the whole firmament in vain to behold. I have toiled, God knows, for this sight, and have failed till now."

"I saw you once, dear Fob," she answered, returning his look of truthful fondness, "once only, and that was a year ago, yesterday, at dusk, gliding by the garden wall; they seized you and dragged you away before my sight, and

ever after, *that* window was closed. The morning light, that came that way (they said) was too strong for my fading eyes."

"For many long days," said Fob, "I was the ghost of that dwelling; I haunted all the ways that led to it—sometimes in the orchard, sometimes in the meadow, sometimes, as you saw, under the very eaves of the house itself. But to what purpose? I had been driven, you know, by the iron hand that no man can resist, the relentless law, from fields that were mine; and men followed in its scent, and yelled on my steps like so many hounds. I was buffeted, reproached, driven off like a dog, till I came to curse the very house that held your enemies and mine. I have failed not, as you learned by what I wrote, to visit our old haunts, and to dream you back again to the life we once led in woods and meadows, and by the margins of smiling streams. How has the time gone with you?" he asked, in a choking voice, for he knew the answer too well. "You have had no free air for three weary years."

"No breath whatever," she said, and a deeper paleness struck through her features as she spoke, "closely housed, stealthily watched all that time; while the story has gone abroad that I was deadly sick, of a sickness so frail and delicate, that nearest friends could not see me without endangering life. A physician—a false, corrupt villain, as God ever made—came at studious intervals as if to my bedside, and went forth with a piteous sigh, shaking his head over the sad malady that could not be cured. So they thought. They deemed that disease of horrid bondage would never be conquered; but, thanks to Heaven, thanks, never too many nor too devout, I am a free child of the air and the open light once more!"

Even while she spake, swift, copious tears, gushed into her eyes; she fell upon her knees, and, bowing her head upon the couch of her sick friend, felt that her heart was bursting with thoughts of past sufferance and present joy! Could Fob behold this, and fail to be moved? He looked upon her a moment; a pang writhed his countenance, and clasping one of her pale hands in his, he wept like a child. The wild slip with which she had soothed his sleep, lay where all their tears fell upon it; and if it had budded that moment, and shot forth there, in fair green leaves and brighter flowers than bush or tree ever bore, would it have been less than a true testimony to the beautiful and gentle spirit of the hour?

When they looked up again, the sorrow had passed from their brows, and they smiled on each other, with something like the gladness of a happier time.

"I have brought down all of the old homestead that I could," said Martha, who had her willow basket at the bedside; "and it is here."

She unclasped it; and as Fob glanced down into its fragrant womb, his eyes shone with a new light. He saw whole tracts and acres there.

"These, you know," continued Martha, producing a handful of green cresses, "I plucked them from the Mower's nook, in the wood, so calm and shady in the summer time. You remember it?"

"I think I should," answered Fob, who could not fail to detect a ruddy tinge that crossed the questioner's countenance. "Had that nook a memory of its own, and could echo what it has heard, how many gentle stories it could tell: that *you* know as well as I."

"Here is clover, too," said Martha, "you know that?"

"To be sure I do," answered Fob, quickly, "The sweet, red-blossomed clover, that grows by the great rock in the lane—you found it there, I know. Is the shadow of the old rock as broad and cheerful as ever?"

"You forget, my dear friend," she replied, "I have not seen its summer shadow for three long years. Boards and casements, thin and frail, have held me in faster than if I had been walled round with rocks as massy and cold as that."

"What a fool I am!" said Fob, "I knew that well—but here—what is this?" taking up a green plant that she had produced, and looking on his pale visitor in wonder, "you have not, truly, trusted yourself in the dark old hollow, always so full of midnight and gloomy thoughts to pluck this for me?"

"From no other place has it come!" answered Martha. "It was the first I sought after my escape. Dark, dreary, cheerless as you think it—though we have had many a pleasant ramble in its ways—it glared as with sunshine to my long darkened eye. The dismal pines that dwell on its sides, seemed to laugh in my ear, as the wind whispered with them; the dark bats and ill-omened owls glanced about as glorious as eagles!"

"Our gloomy old friend, the Hollow—you think so hardly of—see what he has yielded," said Martha, after a moment's pause, lifting in her hand a bunch of sparkling red berries, and waving them before the little tailor till they danced again, and shone brighter than his own pleased eyes.

Then there were buttercups, gathered from the heart of a meadow, where they had often lingered together, gathering them before; green rushes, from the brook; feathers of the blue-bird, that had moulted where they were found. On each they dwelt, babbling over old memories and associations like children; and finding a solace and joy in those simple treasures, that the costliest banquet might have failed to yield.

All the green and fanciful treasures she had brought, lay spread about him, and his eye gleamed with a tearful joy as it passed from one to the other.

"I have something more here," said Martha, dipping again into the basket, "something to please you for the sake of others and not yourself."

"I shall shed no tears, even if it be so," said Fob, smiling. "Let us see."

She brought forth, from the very bottom of the basket, an old, tattered, patched-up parchment, and held it up exultingly before his eyes. He no sooner caught sight of it and learned what it was, than he clapped his hands and stretched them forth to pluck it gently from her. It was the deed, the very deed, rent in pieces so long ago—which he thought lost for ever, rescued to the light by bright eyes that had peered for it amid dust and tumbling fragments, because she knew it would pleasure him. Here was joy—joy for Puffer Hopkins; joy for Hobbleshank; and as he held it close to his eye, it seemed, as every good act and record should, to have a fragrance of all the sweet and fair things among which it had lurked in the basket of the fair fugitive. So they sat there many hours, in which Fob gathered new strength and spirit, talking over the recovery, past times, scenes, occasions—too sacred for a record. If unseen angels, as some have fondly deemed, watch in our chambers, linger at our bedsides, and bless us in act of doing well, how must they have swarmed in that little chamber, and through the holiest hours of night, held joyful watch over two spirits so like themselves!

## CHAPTER XXI.

### ISHMAEL SMALL MAKES A DISCOVERY.

ANGEL-GUARDED as a generous faith would fain persuade us, were the little tailor and his country friend, within—an eye, by no means so kindly or auspicious in its gaze, watched all their doings from without. Perched in the very gutter of the Fork, clinging to the casement of the dormer window, as he best could, and holding his head obliquely—sat or couched—Ishmael Small. His turned-up nose against the window as close as he could press it, he kept a hungry look fastened on every glance, or gesture, or motion, that passed within. He could not catch their voices where he sat, but seemed to know all that passed as if he had heard it slowly uttered, word by word. When the deed was produced, could they have caught sight of that sharp gray eye, piercing through the very centre of the bull's-eye with which the cheap casement was glazed, they would have both shrunk back and said, "What ugly spirit is that—that glares like a sunglass upon us?"

Up to that moment, Ishmael had looked calmly on; but when he saw the old shivering parchment brought forth, and clutched so greedily by the poor tailor, he gnashed his teeth, and, turning about, with a glance downward at a stout man in jolly health, who passed in the street below with a market-basket on his arm, as if it would afford him a most exquisite pleas-

ure to topple himself down upon him, and crush all that manly vigor out of him—he crept up the roof, and espying a narrow rent—scarcely larger than his hand—where a single ray came through from the chamber, laid his ear close down, and, with his chalky visage turned to the sky, he held his breath, and listened to what passed. He was right. All the hours he had spent in tracking Hobbleshank from place to place; all the vague rumors that had crept into his mind, as, from time to time, his acquaintance with Puffer Hopkins grew; all his long vigils about the Fork (whose evil genius, as night and day, but mostly by night, he hovered round it, he seemed)—all confirmed and made true. When this conviction shot through the brain of the deformed little eaves-dropper, his knees shook, his eyes dimmed for a moment, his grasp relaxed, and, had he not summoned at once with desperate force, his ebbing strength, he would have rolled into the street. Recovering himself, he paused not a minute to listen—he knew enough and more than enough already—clambered the roof again—plunged into the open scuttle by which he had at first emerged—and dived—so swift was his descent of the narrow stairs, it seemed, from top to bottom, a single act—into the open air. Buttoning his coat close together—fixing his cap firmly on his head, and thrusting in his straggling pocket-handkerchief behind—so that not a single fluttering rag might check his course, he started off. Like lightning he sped along, bounding over obstacles; winding his way through crowds that crossed him; and gliding between vehicles that seemed rushing together from opposite directions—in a fashion that was perfectly miraculous.

It was only a few minutes, and he stood at the broker's door. He stopped an instant to recover his breath, listening if he were astir; then, thrusting his arm in at a concealed opening in the wall, he drew back the bolt and stepped in. Closing the door behind him, and cautiously crossing the room, he knocked at the broker's closet.

"Hold back," cried the old man, in a suppressed voice, like one engaged in a desperate struggle, "what are you choking me for? Take it back, take it all back; but let me go. There, curse it, there—she glides by again. It was your own fault."

Ishmael knocked again.

"Let me go, or I'll beat you," shouted the old broker, who seemed to be vexed and goaded on by the sound, mingled, as it doubtless was, with the subjects of his dream. "What did you cross me for? She is mine, I tell you, as much as yours, Hobbleshank! Marry her, and I'll grind you to powder; ha! ha!" and he laughed, with a broad chuckle, in his dream. "That fixes you. Buy bread if you can; a cord or two of wood; I'm sorry the poor lady's so sickly. Take the boy away; smother him, choke him, drown him! ha! ha!"

"Wake up, wake up!" whispered Ishmael,

whose spirits, to tell the truth, were not a little subdued by what the restless slumbers of the old broker seemed to point at. "I have news, great news for you!"

"I know you have," continued Fyler, who seemed bent on pursuing his dreaming thoughts at all hazards. "That was well done, Jack Leycraft—excellent! the little fellow fainted away, did he?—so far that he wont come back again, I guess."

And Mr. Fyler Close, wonder at it as the world may, such was the flow of his spirits, went off, chanting Old Hundred; to be sure, in a somewhat dissonant and imperfectly developed vocalization. This divertisement had the effect of restoring him to the familiar use of his organs, and availing himself of his ears, quite readily, he heard a quadruple rap, which Ishmael was now practising on the door; and asked who was there. Ishmael made himself known, and the old man, sliding rapidly into his garments, unbarred his closet door, and stepped forth.

"Well, what word, Ishmael?" he asked, as soon as he was disinterested.

"Come this way," said Mr. Small, taking the broker by the arm, and leading him toward the window. As they stood where the light fell from a neighboring chamber, in which watch was kept with one disordered in his reason, and whose cries could be heard where they stood, and Ishmael saw how haggard and withered was the broker's look, he doubted whether to utter his news now that he was there. He paused awhile and looked at Fyler.

"You heard nothing," he said, eying Ishmael in turn. "Did I disturb you? I was running over a long sum in compound interest. I got the figures wrong, and that put me in a passion. You saw that?"

Ishmael professed to have seen nothing.

"What's your news?" asked Fyler. "Nothing terrible, I hope. Is it a thunderclap, or a burst of music?—speak quick!"

Before he answered, Mr. Small went to the door, thrust forth his head into the hall, and, opening wide both his ears, listened to catch any sound that might be stirring. The whole house was dead and still, and he returned.

"A cross between the two," answered Ishmael, subduing his voice, "they have found the deed."

"What deed—Hobbleshank's?" asked the old man, gasping for breath, and drawing Ishmael close up to him by the collar, so that their faces almost touched.

"The very same, sir," answered Ishmael, "yaller with age, and patched up like a old bed-quilt."

If the blackest thundercloud hovering in the sky had settled down that moment, and become part and parcel of the features of Fyler Close, they could not have scowled more darkly than they did. He let fall his hand from its hold on Ishmael Small; and turning away, he paced the chamber; at every turn, as he came near

the light, glaring like a wild beast on Ishmael, and showing his teeth firmly set together, in the extremity of his passion.

After travelling the apartment in this wild way for twenty times or more, he suddenly stepped aside, and leaping into his closet, bolted it within. Ishmael waited till the clock struck midnight, sitting on a broken chair, listening to the disordered sick man's cry from above; but not a breath or sound denoted that any other living creature was in that chamber but himself. The closet might have been the broker's tomb, for all he heard. At the end of that time the closet-door was again opened; Fyler Close came forth as if nothing unusual had passed, and, bringing a chair, took his seat, calmly and pleasantly, directly opposite Mr. Small.

"Where is John Leycraft, of late, Ishmael?" asked Mr. Close, as though his mind was entirely disengaged, and free to any general subject that might come up. "He doesn't come here now-a-days. Have you kept track of him?"

"I have," answered Ishmael. "Last week he was busy in a cardin' mill; week afore last he was journeyman to a stun-mason; this week he's a rope-walker; where he'll be next week, and the week after, would puzzle a jury o' Solomons to guess. His mind's distempered, judging by what he says to me when I see him, about that old business of the farm-house. He can't rest a day anywheres, but flies about like a singed pigeon upon a conflagration, or a dove what's got sore feet."

"Will he blab, Ishmael?" answered Mr. Close, in a perfectly calm and dispassionate tone. "He's got a first-rate memory, and might turn it to account with the magistrates. Don't you think so, eh?"

"By no manner o' means," rejoined Mr. Small. "It's his own mind that unrests him and keeps him wake o' nights. He wants to find the boy, and clear his conscience with the yolk of the egg; that's all."

"If he's got an eye that can look through the crust of the earth, six feet or more, perhaps he'll find him, perhaps he won't," said the broker, smiling on his companion, and twisting his shabby whiskers in his fingers. "So you've seen the deed?" he added, as if that had just occurred to him. "You couldn't borrow it for me to look at for a few minutes, eh? Was it in good preservation, in a fine state of health?"

"Capital," answered Ishmael, "considerin' it hadn't a sound square inch on its body, and was a little bilious in the face: if there had been a hole two inches bigger in the roof, I'd have brought it round for an interview." Whereupon, Mr. Small indulged in a gentle laugh; but not so as to disturb the neighborhood.

"Where, in the name of Heaven, have you been to-night?" continued Mr. Close, "running about citizens' roofs, like a cat?"

"To be sure I have," answered Mr. Small; "and a very agreeable time I've had of it I can tell you; overseenin' the city, and lookin'

out that the watchmen was on duty, and the lamps lit. Church steeples and tops o' public buildings, is spruce beer at twopence a glass, compared with it. Then there was a very charming young 'oman, that brought the parchment out of the country where she found it, inside, sitting like a wax figure to be looked at, and Fob, the little tailor, actin' like mad, kissing 'sparagus-sprigs and mock-oranges, like a hero, just for greens. I can't say I ever had a more agreeable night of it in my life, where there was only three of the party!"

"Ishmael," said Fyler Close, withdrawing the attention of his companion from these delightful prospects, "we must restrain in the Row to-morrow."

"Out and out?" asked Ishmael.

"Out and out," answered Mr. Close, "down to the plant-pots and Dutch oven. No nonsense, but a clean sweep; here's the warrants. Go down to Meagrim, at the very earliest hour in the morning." And he handed Ishmael a bundle of documents filled up and ready for use.

"No delay?" asked Ishmael.

"Not a minute; and tell Meagrim to move the goods off, sell at the shortest notice, close up at once, and bring me the result in gold. He must throw off interest on his commissions: mention that to him when you see him to-morrow."

Ishmael promised it should be looked to the very hour the court opened; and was about to leave.

"You'll stand by me, Ishmael?" asked Fyler, regarding him with a look that Ishmael did not recollect to have seen him ever wear before. "You'll stick to me through all?"

"I will, Uncle Fyler," answered Ishmael, taking the old broker's proffered hand. "I'll be a stren'thin' plaster to your back; a pair o' double magnifiers to your eyes; and a patent truss to your hip-joints. Losin' the use of your legs, I'll be crutches to you; and when you come to give up the ghost!"

"As to that last particular," interposed Fyler Close, "suppose we adjourn conversation twenty-five years. That isn't too long? But when it does happen, as I suppose it must one day, I'll leave you an old chest or two to rummage, that's all I can, you know; and if you find anything it shall be yours."

Mr. Small shook hands upon the understanding, and was moving off again.

"Come this way, Ishmael," said the broker, as Mr. Small was at the door. "Listen!"

At that moment, a fearful cry issued from the chamber where the disordered man lodged; voices in supplication or menace were raised upon him; and presently a dead silence followed, as if the struggler had been finally subdued.

"There's close quarters up there," said Fyler, looking first at Ishmael, then lifting his meager finger, and shaking it in the direction whence these sounds had come. "Stout



chaps, brawny fellows; and not a word uttered by the poor sick devil that's believed." He dropped his voice to the lowest whisper, and added, "I'll drive Hobbleshank to *that* pass yet!" Ishmael renewing his promise to execute his orders promptly, on the morrow, and smiling in answer to the hideous grin that lighted the old broker's countenance, withdrew.

The broker himself sat by the window, listening to the cries of the lunatic, and waiting for the break of day that he might hear the blacksmith's mortgaged hammer sound, and fix his eyes once more on the securities spread about him.

## CHAPTER XXII.

MR. FYLER CLOSE INVOKES THE AID OF MR. MEAGRIM AND THE LAW.

PURSUANT to his engagement with the broker, Ishmael at the proper hour, having first laid aside his cap, and substituted in its place a round-rimmed hat, embellished with a strip of crape—set forth to carry the wishes of Mr. Fyler Close into effect. Getting by an easy road into Chatham street, which was his favorite promenade, he pursued his course, not quite so gaily as usual, but with sufficient exuberance of spirits to indulge in an occasional sportive sally, as he pushed his way along the crowded street. Once feigning to be taking a leisurely walk, a mere after-breakfast stroll, with his hands crossed quietly behind him, he suddenly brought one of them forth, and letting it drop gently on the crown of an errand-boy, fresh from the country, and who was gaping and staring at the various street sights—he left the young gentlemen ssagging about as if under the influence of a sturdy morning draught. This, and a few others like it, were, however, mere prefaces and flourishes of his humor; but when he got to the declivity of the street, where it forms a cheerful perspective of mouldy garments and black-whiskered Jews, Mr. Small knew that he was in a province that his genius had made his own. He slackened his pace a little, as he began to climb the street; and keeping his eye fixed on its other extremity, waited a moment till he espied certain figures turning into it out of another thoroughfare; his eye kindled, and smiling, and touching his hat gracefully to the young gentlemen who stood in the shop-doors, many of whom were his particular friends, he strolled on. It was almshouse morning, Wednesday, when the public charities are distributed at the park office to the poor; and as Ishmael rambled on, he met the various creatures of the city bounty hobbling forward in every variety of gait, aspect, and apparel, and bearing their alms in every kind of characteristic utensil and implement; poor women bringing theirs in broken baskets, concealed with woman's shrinking care, under old,

tattered cloaks; and the men bearing theirs openly on their backs, or tied in soiled cotton handkerchiefs.

As he approached these parties, Ishmael assumed a benevolent aspect, and proceeded to put in practice the philanthropic purpose with which he was inspired. The first that he encountered was a glazier carrying his arms in an old glazier's box: drawing near, Mr. Small accosted him with "Stop a moment, my friend—don't trouble yourself to set it down;" lifting the lid and depositing within what seemed a liberal donation in money—"There; go home as fast as you can, and invest that little deposite in a couple of tender steaks and two twisted rolls: you're hungry and they'll do you good!" Ishmael passed on to another (amid the smiles of his acquaintance in the shops, who seemed to admit it was well done), who might have been a great traveller in his time, for he sustained his burden in a faded carpet-bag, slung from his shoulder at the end of a walking-staff. Ishmael begged to know what was his favorite dish, which the beggar modestly declining to answer, Mr. Small said, "I know what it is—it's turkey done brown, with sauce of oysters; here's a couple of quarters,"—placing in his hand the apparent coin,—“and there's a extra twenty-five center to treat yourself to the pit o' the the-a-tre after dinner.” And Ishmael drew another from a pocket, the issues of which seemed to be as free and unlimited as those of any modern bank.

Mr. Small claimed to be no banker or financier, but he had certainly managed to create a currency which diffused a pleasure and satisfaction wherever it flowed. Was it any fault of his if his pensioners should afterward chance to wake from a delusion, and find that what they took for a legal mintage, was nothing more than a fictitious currency of electioneering silver, bearing on one side the device of an attractive donkey, with his mouth full of political labels, and on the reverse that of a man in a cage, starving in consequence of the times brought upon the country by the party against whom it was aimed? The silver was a purchase of Ishmael's from one of the churches—to whose plate it had been contributed by certain liberal-minded politicians, who were pew-holders therein.

Spreading his largesses in this way on every side, with the unqualified approbation of his Jewish friends, and maintaining for the time at least the character of a large-souled philanthropist, Ishmael reached the court, with more sincere good wishes and blessings sent after him, than ever, in all probability, accompanied a traveller in that direction before.

A rarer or more curious gathering of mortal creatures than compose the posse of officers, marshals, and litigants, that haunt the Small court—the Twenty Pound jurisdiction, it has been no man's fortune to see. In the first place, the Small court is held in a square room of very limited dimensions—where the court



itself in triple majesty sits—with its purlieu in the rear of the city park; the purlieu consisting in part of another square room, where a very red-nosed man roams about inside of a railed cage, opening great ledgers and closing them, and holding no other intercourse with the barbarous world without, than to accept from time to time small tributes of coin, which he carefully deposits in a yawning drawer, wide and deep enough to swallow all that may be cast in.

A further purlieu of the Small court adjoins this sacred precinct, and consists of two small dens to which the worshipful judges withdraw, at certain seasons of the day, and brood over the wickedness and corruption of mankind; which they avenge by giving wrong-headed verdicts against parties who venture to molest them in their retirement. Through these various purlieus and avenues, there circulates from ten, morning, till three, afternoon, a constant tide of unclean, unwashed, and wrathful humanity, in at one door, out at another, making noisy friths and creeks, as it were, all over the place, and whirling round and round in a perpetual vortex. The tide was not quite at its height when Ishmael entered; and the retainers of the court who had assembled were therefore not too many to be observed apart. It was the clerk's room that Ishmael entered—where the officers and others are in waiting till they are called—or transacting such business as may be put in their charge.

There was one man sitting in a corner, stout-built and heavy, with a great red nose—even much larger and fierier than the clerk's—that seemed to throw a glow over the newspaper he held before him, and which he was reading through a pair of coarse horn spectacles: while a spare man of a pale aspect was hobbling across the court-room on unequal legs, bearing a process to the clerk's desk within the rail. Another ruby-nosed officer, much taller, but not as stout as the other, was sitting in the doorway, looking out steadily, and with as much keenness as his brandy-stained face would permit, for the approach of one of their high mightinesses and supreme disposers of Twenty Pound cases—the justice himself. There was a constable with one eye gone, but concentrating in the other sufficient spite and small malice to light up the organs of four-and-twenty rattlesnakes or more: and another, a huge, overgrown man, in a dirty gray coat, with a great wen on his forehead, who sat upon a stool at a high desk, leaning over a paper and painfully casting up the interest on a very small sum for a very short time, and due and accruing from a retail grocer, both stout and small; and furthermore, at this time, sadly invalid from want of funds.

Presently there was a bustle at the door; a great rapping on a desk in front of the bench, on the part of an impudent-looking man, who directed his eyes steadfastly toward the door as he knocked; a tumultuous shout of "hats off"

from all quarters of the room, a rush from the side rooms to the door of that where the chief court was held, and along came a little weazen-faced, crop-haired gentleman, shuffling through the press, and making his way toward the judge's seat, into which he presently dropped; and after wriggling about uncomfortably for a few minutes, as if he had got into the prisoner's dock by mistake, and was on trial for non-compos or something corresponding, he called to the crier, over the desk-rail, for the day's calendar.

Recovering a little, as he became better accustomed to his station, he began shortly to call order, and in very doubtful English required people to "make less noise" in the outskirts of the court-room, where a great hubbub was rapidly engendering, to which the offenders listened with the most profound respect, while it was uttering, but as soon as his voice had fairly ceased, proceeded with renewed animation, and as if it had been the purpose of his honor to cheer them on and encourage them in what they were about.

Immediately in the heels of the judge—he had walked down with that functionary, that he might enjoy an opportunity to color his mind to the right complexion for a case that was coming on that morning—a marble-faced man came in, dressed in clean black from crown to toe, with a pair of vicious black eyes, and a chattering smile as he entered. This was Mr. Meagrim, the marshal; and glancing about to recognise his customers and acquaintance, he glided out of the court-room into the clerk's purlieu, where Ishmael waited his coming.

"Ah! Mr. Small," he said, recognising that gentleman where he stood, in a corner, talking with one of the brandy-painted constables, "what is it, now?" And he drew Ishmael aside, and dropping his voice to a stealthy whisper, inquired what he needed. They whispered apart for a short time; and Mr. Meagrim, gliding away again, promised to return in a minute, as soon as he had seen the oath sworn against a brass-founder defendant, that he might levy on his cart and harness as they passed along.

When Mr. Meagrim had left, the brandy-stained gentleman returned, and renewed the discourse the marshal had interrupted.

"What did you say this crape was for, Ish?" asked the constable, glancing at Mr. Small's round-rimmed beaver.

"That crape," answered Ishmael, "is a sign o' mournin' and lamentation for the juryman that was killed in the box last week, by Counsellor Boerum's speech, which was slow in its operations, you know, but sure. Where's your weeper, and Crany's and Jimmerson's? Why han't all the officers got their weepers on?"

"There's no occasion that I can see," answered the constable; "nobody's lost any relations here that I know on, this week; has there?"

"Hallo!—what are you dreamin' about,"

cried Ishmael, in well-feigned surprise, "I thought your judges was all dead. I understood this court—and who'll deny it I wonder—was under the jurisdiction of judges' ghosts—not live judges—but judges in a state of semi-animation and imperfect vitality!"

By the time the subdued laughter which prevailed among the officers on the occasion of the ingenious observation of Mr. Small had subsided, Mr. Meagrim returned, quietly interchanged a word or two with the clerk, ordered Messrs. Crany and Jimmerson to follow, and set forth in company with Ishmael.

When they got into the street, Ishmael and the marshal led the way, and Messrs. Crany and Jimmerson, who were a pair of ill-matched constables, greatly dilapidated by use and age, trotted after. Presently Mr. Small, suggesting to Mr. Meagrim, that he had a slight commission to execute by the way, dropped behind, with a promise to overtake them in the course of a block or two. Soon after, and when his companions were well out of sight, he began to cast about, with an impatient and ominous look; and in a moment, hastening to a spot on which his eye had rested with unbounded satisfaction, he stood at a baker's window; a minute after he was in the baker's shop—and, allowing him a minute more, and he was strolling forth, holding in his hand a delicate amalgam, formed of a slice of fresh bread and a slice of pound-cake laid close together.

"The wickedness and desperation of the world is such," said Ishmael, as he cut into the amalgam, "that it exhausts one's ingenuity and wits to make it go down. It's not bad, however," and he cut again, "if one could only wet it with a drink of pure gin, without being put to the vulgarity of payin' for it!"

Now it is pretty generally known that there is a body of thirty-four gentlemen, recognised and described as the corporation of the city and county of New York, whose sole business it is, according to popular belief, to sit as a board of brewers; and whose constant employment it likewise is, for which they are chosen by the people at large and held in great honor therefor, to brew and distil a well-known popular beverage, which has gone into extensive use. Ishmael, faithful to the promise he had made to himself, paused at one of the public stills, where this drink is distributed, and lifting a long wooden arm in the air, bending his head forward and drawing the wooden arm after him, with a good deal of dexterity and manual skill, took a large, copious, and exhilarating draught of the beverage in question. He then gracefully wiped his mouth; and restoring his handkerchief to his pocket, leaving a small segment only exposed for the public admiration, he followed on.

Hurrying along, now that he was thoroughly refreshed, Ishmael reached Mr. Meagrim at the square, where he was busy bargaining for the services of a cartman, who being at last retained, galloped forward up the street, while

Mr. Meagrim and his followets, keeping him in view, swept on.

When they reached the neighborhood of Close's row, Mr. Meagrim ordered the cart to halt without, and entering slyly with his train, took but a moment's glance at the building, and fell to business.

Ishmael was despatched to the roof, with a handful of nails and an upholsterer's hammer, produced from the marshal's pocket; Mr. Jimmerson to the lightning maker's garret; and Mr. Meagrim himself, with the cartman and Mr. Crany in his train, proceeded to the recalcitrant cobbler's. Such was the nimbleness and dexterity with which Mr. Small executed his portion of the business, that by the time Meagrim and his followers reached the garret, they found the cobbler knocking his head and fists, like a madman, against the closed scuttle, and threatening to pitch his besieger from the roof, if he could once get out. When he found himself hemmed in by other tormentors, in the persons of the officers and posse, his rage was greatly increased, and he danced about the apartment in an extempore hornpipe, more like a Huron chief than a franchise citizen. Notwithstanding he saw that he was overpowered, when the officers seized one end of his corded bale of valuables, he fastened on the other, and tugged at it, till they had fairly dragged it down stairs, the cobbler asseverating that marshals and all such cattle were a nuisance in a civilized community; demanding to know what right they had to touch his property, and pointedly aspersing the legislature for presuming to pass such laws.

Sweeping everything in in their course, chairs, tables, stair-rods, Dutch-oven—they descended into the precinct of the bereaved mother; the cobbler shouting lustily after them all the way.

Here their proceedings were quite as summary—although they were impeded not a little by the levity of Mr. Crany, who clapped his hands upon his knees, and, bending almost double, burst into a horse-laugh, every time his eye fell upon the wooden quadruped and crape-dressed vase on the mantel; for which extravagance he was sharply rebuked by Mr. Meagrim, who told him he'd better stick to business; while the cartman, who seemed to have a woman's soul under his cart-frock, privily thrust what was equivalent to his whole day's wages in the mother's hand.

In the meantime, Mr. Jimmerson, pursuant to order, had proceeded to the lightning-maker's quarters, but coming in at an unlucky moment, when the artist was in one of his absent moods, he had scarcely had time to disclose his business, when, by some cursed mischance, a large bottle slipped off, and striking him in a most sensitive part of his person, he was unceremoniously thrown on his back. There he lay, agitating his hands and feet, like a great green turtle in a spasm, until the lightning-maker, who was up to his elbows in a vile yellow mixture, rushed toward him, and, expressing a

profound regret for what had occurred, began chafing his temples, beating his hands, and punching his body.

The lightning-maker was bending over Mr. Jimmerson, when Mr. Small—who had lingered on the roof, watching a market-sloop that was sailing down the river—came down, and adding his own endeavors to the artist's, the constable was soon put upon his legs, and they proceeded in their business. Acting in the self-same spirit with the others, Ishmael and his aid cleared the house, down to the very cellar-floor, of all that came, by the most liberal construction, under their warrant. Two wide gates that led into the yard were thrown open; the cart driven in; the goods piled on in a threatening pyramid; and perching on the very top, whither he had climbed, with saucepans, broken candle-stands, and rugged tables, for the steps of his arduous ascent, sat Mr. Ishmael Small, presiding over the whole, like the very genius of distress-warrants and chaotic chat-tels. Men, women, and children—the tenants of the row—gathered in the windows, looking upon the wreck, pale-cheeked and hollow-eyed; the cobbler alone, holding his station in a doorway, and manfully vociferating against the iniquity of the whole proceeding.

The cart was driven off; Messrs. Crany and Jimmerson—the last with a dolefully bilious complexion—trotting along, and keeping watch on either side; and Mr. Meagrim, smooth-browed and unruffled, following with a hawk's eye in the rear.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### PUFFER HOPKINS INQUIRES AGAIN AFTER HOBBLESHANK.

DAY had scarcely dawned when Puffer was called up into the chamber of the little tailor. As he entered, in quick answer to the summons, dreading some fatal crisis in his disease, Martha was at the bedside, dwelling upon the countenance of Fob with a fixed earnestness, watching every look and turn, and ministering to his wish before it was uttered; and Puffer, who knew that Fob had had the whole house, in every one of its chambers, for a nurse, and yet none so gentle as this one, wondered whence she came, and turned toward the little tailor, with a question in his look. Fob, busy with other thoughts, held spread out before him, as wide as his thin, feeble arms would allow, the old parchment, on which his eyes—wide apart, too—were steadfastly fastened. He greeted Puffer as he drew nearer to his couch, and requested him, with a knowing smile, to stand off.

"You shan't come so near!" said Fob, still with a grave smile, "I can't allow it. There—stand where you are and tell me what you see?"

Puffer, who had been driven back by Fob's urgency, to almost the other wall of the chamber, confessed that, with the doubtful light, he could see nothing worth mentioning.

"Well, well," pursued Fob, rising upon his elbows in his bed, and shifting the position of the parchment so that it fronted the window, "I must allow you a sunbeam or two; what do you see now?"

Still Puffer averred nothing. Then Fob permitted him to come a foot or two nearer, still without effect; and at last, in a sort of pleased impatience, he threw the deed toward him, and told him to read for himself.

"He wants to show off his scholarship, Martha, that's all," said Fob, who stretched his neck forward and watched the countenance of Puffer. A glance had sufficed to show him all. There it was written, in a good bold hand, HOBBLESHANK; and there was the clause, word for word as Fob had recited it, touching his child, and showing, clearly enough, the tenure by which he held his right. And now something of the old man's hopes began to break upon him; as his mind ran back, with inconceivable swiftness, he found he held the key by which to interpret his sad snatches of talk; his wild, melancholy cry that all was lost; and then returned upon him, too, the pledge he had proffered to his aged friends. He clasped the little tailor in an earnest grasp; thanked him that he had borne in mind his poor wish that he might do a service to the kind old man; and, returning the deed again to Fob, for present custody, he set forth in a renewed search after Hobbleshank. There was not a spot nor place where he had but heard the name of Hobbleshank mentioned that he did not visit. Till noonday he was busy going about from one place to another, following out an imperfect clew—when having learned that the old man had been a constant loungee upon the wharves, spending whole days in looking up and down the river (with what purpose nobody could ever guess), Puffer spent several hours more, in going from pier to pier, watching the sloops and other river craft as they arrived, with the hope that he might have wandered away into the country and would choose this path back. Then he crossed the city to the piehouse, where they had passed their first night together. Being told that he never came there till toward dusk, he waited about, questioning every one that entered; but dusk and broad night, even, failed to bring the one he sought. He then aimed for Barrell's oyster-house—he had reserved this, with a strong hope, for the last. When he had reached the oyster-house his heart smote him—the cellar-doors were closed and a faint light streamed upon the walk and up into the faces of passers-by from the glass bull's-eye in the door. It might be shut for the night. He knocked; no answer was returned; knocked again, and the glass eye grew dull; he bent down and whispered his name; the eye brightened at once, and he was admitted. Politician

as he was, he was compelled to stop and stand stone-still on the steps, in wonder and amazement at what he saw.

The little stalls about the place, used to hold one customer with difficulty—and not that, if he grew too fast and stout upon the choice shell-fish of Mr. Jarve Barrell—now swarmed with damp, dripping faces, as thickly set as dewy cauliflowers on a wall; the fire was out, and the rear of the cellar shorn of its benches and small square tables, had passed through a remarkable transformation; the chief circumstance of which was, that Mr. Nicholas Finch, the indefatigable agent, was seated on a stool, his legs spread apart, and between his legs, so spread apart, the head of a kneeling gentleman, of scant apparel, bent down. Upon the head, Mr. Finch was most industriously employed, in spite of the remonstrances, entreaties, and contortions of the catechumen. Lounging against the end of the oyster-stand, picking off oysters from a plate with a delicate touch, and surveying this proceeding from time to time, as his leisure permitted, stood a young gentleman chastely apparelled in white jean pants of a fashionable cut, an elegant blue coat, and bushy whiskers.

"Hallo!" cried the oyster-eater, at an unusual spasm on the part of Mr. Finch's gentleman, "you're a purty feller, arn't you, for a feller-citizen—when you know towels and soap is the price of freedom—blow me tight if it a'nt, Nick." The oyster-eater had small eyes and stout chaps, and he smiled, with an oyster on his fork, as he uttered these words. Mr. Finch was silent, but plied his arms with wonderful diligence.

"I'll take another, Mr. Codwise," said Mr. Finch, looking up. The kneeling gentleman jumped to his feet, rubbed his eyes, and walking off to a corner of the cellar, took his seat on a bench, the second in a row. The oyster-eater laid down his fork, pieked his way nicely to one of the stalls, and taking one of the ragged tenants daintily by the collar, led him out upon the floor; and, giving him an energetic impulse with his foot, directed him to Mr. Finch. Upon this gentleman Mr. Finch fell to work in like manner; and the owner of the blue coat and bushy whiskers resumed his oysters. This was certainly a lively subject; his outcries were much louder and his writhings more frequent, and the raptures of Mr. Codwise proportionably heightened; so much so, that he at last left off his oysters entirely, to watch the spectacle, and smiled so earnestly that the tears came into his eyes.

"Bear your sufferin's like a man and a gentleman," said Mr. Codwise, whose delivery was somewhat imperfect, but in a tone of patronizing encouragement. "Split my vest, but don't be cast down because the fibre's coarse. Oh, it's a glorious privilege, an't it, Mr. Finch, to enjoy the right of votin' an independent ticket?" The consolation administered by

Mr. Codwise was not quite satisfactory, for Mr. Finch's patient writhed again at a fresh application, down to his very extremities. At this moment a plunge was heard beyond, from behind a faded curtain, stretched across the rear of the apartment, and through which a dull light glimmered and painted upon it shadowy figures moving within. A voice remonstrated—a voice, Mr. Jarve Barrell's, by the accent, responded, and a second plunge. What could this mean? Could it be that Puffer Hopkins had got into a branch penitentiary, established under-ground, where new tortures and fresh-devised penalties were inflicted on the criminal?

When he looked at the men about him, there was certainly something in their gait to warrant the belief; and when he saw the secrecy with which the rites of the place were performed, he might have been easily assured that these men had been guilty of offences against God and man that drew upon them the dungeon and the rack, which Mr. Finch and Mr. Barrell seemed to be administering. There was a smell of the prison in their garments, and something of the dull fixedness of prison-walls in their look.

There seemed, at this juncture, to be a struggle behind the red curtain. "Don't drown me, for Heaven's sake, don't drown me!" cried the first voice again, in a tone of earnest entreaty.

"Dip your head under, you rascal," cried the voice of Jarve Barrell. "Dip your head under, you burglary knave!"

"Petty larceny, sir," whined the other voice, which savored strongly of thin soup and damp lodgings.

"Don't spare the villain!" shouted Mr. Codwise, who had mounted a stool, and with a light in his right hand held high above his head, was peering over the curtain, "it's burglary, I saw it on the keeper's books; it's so on my list. Don't spare him, it's good for his system, an't it, Mr. Barrell? He broke into a respectable house in Fourteenth street, and stole a bottle of Muscat wine and a plate of anchovies. I'll make a patriot of you, you villain, don't you want to serve your country, eh! Tell us that, will you?"

And so it was kept up; Mr. Finch dumb and devoted, heart and soul to the performance of his share of the service; Mr. Barrell coaxing and clamoring from behind the curtain, with the resisters of his authority; and Mr. Codwise dividing his time in equal proportions between the oysters, the leading out of the men from the stalls, baiting Mr. Finch's patients from where he stood, and bantering Mr. Barrell's from over the top of the curtain. At length the noise ceased from behind the curtain, and Mr. Barrell came stamping forth; Mr. Finch dismissed his last patient from under his hand; Mr. Codwise's last oyster had disappeared. The benches were full; and there they sat, all in a row, in their sleeves,

their faces of a bright red, brought on by the spirited exertions of Mr Finch, and their hair flying all abroad.

Puffer inquired what all this meant. What did it mean? He didn't want respectable voters—freemen, freshly delivered from bondage, voting an independent, patriotic ticket—coming up to the polls in dirty faces—did he? He'd like to have 'em show a clean countenance among their fellow citizens—wouldn't he? What was better for 'em than baths and towels? This was Mr. Barrell's explanation, and it agreed well enough with a rumor which had prevailed that prisoners were to be brought down from the island to vote at the coming election.

At the head of the row there was an old window, which, being greatly battered and damaged by age, admitted such currents of air as might be prowling about. The gentlemen in the sleeves murmured at this, and ventured to hint that the cold was coming it rather sharp and strong.

"Be silent, ye scum of the earth," cried Mr. Codwise, the moment he detected a glimpse of insubordination, coming forward and planting himself directly in their front, at the same time gently hoisting his shirt collar, "arn't we making men of you? How do you expect to be worthy of freedom if you don't fit yourself for it by a course of trials and tribulations? Look at me! Didn't I risk my neck in getting you off the island—whose your deliverer but me, you bottle-flies? There's few rich men's sons would ha' done as much—is there, Mr. Finch? is there, Barrell? True, I might ha' been sittin' by my father's parlor fire, eatin' sandwiches and drinkin' claret—and what do I do? Why, I hire an omnibus at an expense of three dollars an hour, didn't I, Mr. Finch? and blow me tight if I didn't wait upon you, you miserable wretches off the island, as though you had been so many Broadway promenaders of the sex, help you into your carriage and bring you to a friend's house for lodgings—didn't I, Mr. Barrell? and now you grumble about that winder, do you? May my buttons drop off, and my boots run down at the heel, if I don't give up politics and go into the shades of private life, if I see any more sich ingratitude and beastliness!"

Puffer looked at the speaker, saw how poor and frivolous he was, in spite of his trinkets and fair apparel, but when he spoke, in boast of the home where he might be sheltered, a feeling awakened in Puffer's heart which he could not subdue. He thought of himself and the other together, side by side, and asked himself, almost repiningly, why the vague hope that he might be one day restored to a home he had not known for years, should not be fulfilled? Why, as in the other case, the trinkets he wore upon his person were pledges of parental attachment, why the little trinket, the little broken jewel he had treasured so long, as the sole relic of any parent's love toward him,

should not guide him by some kindly providence back to the happiness he should have known? He awakened from his reverie, and turning quickly upon Mr. Jarve Barrell, who stood by his side, he asked after Hobbleshank. Mr. Jarve Barrell's information was strictly professional. All he knew or could tell in the premises, was, that the old man, in company with a stranger, had stopped a long while ago and ordered a large supply of oysters to be ready on their return with sufficient beer to answer. They had never come back, and the oysters were kept till midnight, when a party of sailors luckily coming in swept them up. That was all. Puffer asked no further questions, but climbing the steps, thoughtfully, without salutation or farewell of any kind either to the agent or Mr. Barrell, was in the open air. There he wandered up and down two or three by-streets lost in thought.

At last it occurred to him that he would repair to the old man's lodgings, and seek information of his two old friends; this might only give pain, and to what purpose? Just then a drum sounded about the corner, the current of his thoughts was changed, and he turned into the next street. A boy, in a cocked paper-hat, (a brigadier's hat at least), beating a drum with great energy, marched at the head of a company of youth, who, fitted out in belts and sticks, and bearing crickets and hurdygurdys in their hands, tramped along, assuming the port of martialists and sticking close to the heels of their leader. Puffer, with others, fell in at their wake and followed them down the city to the front of a public hall, embellished with the full-length of a tall military gentleman in a blue coat and yellow breeches, where, forming a line, they plied their instruments for a quarter of an hour, and then marched off. Puffer Hopkins entered the hall; the great room up stairs was packed close with citizens, listening to an excited individual, who walked up and down the platform, swaying his arms and foaming at the mouth, as though he were in a cage, roaring to be let out. This seemed to be to the crowd an entertainment of the first description; but Puffer, paying little heed to the orator, who he knew was going furious according to an understanding with the committee that arranged the meeting, glided about the room, singling out a man here, a man there, and whispering a word in his ear. In a few minutes, keeping clear of the platform and coasting along the wall out of view of the light, he got forth into the street again.

Wherever he moved indications of the contest of to-morrow were rife. The oyster-houses and tap-rooms, everywhere, were full; the citizens throwing themselves upon oysters and punches, with infinite spirit, all through the night, and pausing only every now and then to form into a group and enter upon a discussion of the prospects and chances of the day. Sometimes a grim boy staggered by under a fardel of ballots from the printers; sometimes

a bill-sticker paused, and, clattering his paste-pot on the pavement, proceeded to embellish the wall with a pictorial and ornamental broad-sheet. Every street had its public meeting in the upper chamber of a tavern, whose windows glared with light. It was noticeable that in the neighborhoods of the Gallipot meetings—the friends of Gallipot being in possession of the city—the public lamps were lighted and burned away in the most brilliant and cheerful humor imaginable; whereas, in all the streets lying about a meeting of the opposition, for a furlong or better, they utterly refused to afford a single ray to any that might be in search of such meeting or place of resort. Not only this, but it would not infrequently happen that a public well would be found to be sunk, or undergoing repair, at the very mouth of the opposition halls, affording a capital opportunity for curious geological investigation to such gentlemen of the opposition as might be inclined to step in. Even as it was—as if to supply any deficiency of the corporate light—new lights sprang up on every hand as the night deepened. In committee rooms and other resorts all over town, men were gathered about their tables, mapping out the work of to-morrow, brooding stealthily over circumventions and manœuvres and strokes of craft; in others, cutting tickets and folding them; in others, nursing the patriotic furor in innumerable punches, cock-tails, and cobbleries. And so from every quarter their dusky lights streamed upon the street—making the air close and sultry—and portending surely enough the storm that was to break by morning. Puffer, as he hurried about, dipping in for a minute at a caucus, for another minute at a tap-room, and again at a public meeting, where they seemed bent on keeping huddled together all night long, seething and reeking and growing more confused and more determined, the longer they tarried; Puffer waxed warm, too, and retired to the Fork, with a head full of schemes and a heart all on fire with the sure hope of a triumph.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE CHARTER ELECTION.

THE April sun streamed upon a city in the very crisis of a fever, flushed and curtained all over with flags like a mighty booth or tent of war. The color had apparently all passed out of the red brick houses—now pale with placards—into the faces of the inhabitants. The election, rumbling and foretelling itself for months, had come; and while parts of the town—whole streets and neighborhoods—had the appearance of being abandoned and desolate, others boiled and overflowed with life like so many whirlpools. Each poll or headquarter of the wards was the centre and heart of

streams that choked the streets and blocked up all passage through or beyond. Banners run high up in the air, coiled and twisted and turned about as often as the politicians over whose heads they floated; others, stretched across the thoroughfares, brushed the hats of the crowds, and, as they wavered to and fro, helped to fan the fire into a flame. The excitement was by no means diminished when the voters—many of whom had been up all night long preparing for the contest—rubbed their eyes, and read upon the fences affidavits (which had just come out) to the effect that Gallipot, the candidate of the Bottomites—as they were known at the canvass—had been a smuggler of British paints through the customhouse for years; yes, British paints. Mr. Gallipot's enemies laughed horribly when they read it; but when they had leisure to turn round and read on an opposite wall (it had been drafted, printed, sworn to, and posted up almost while they were busy spelling out the other), that Mr. Blinker, the president of the Phœnix company, and their own candidate—he had been put up at the last moment by the opposition—had murdered a traveller fourteen years before, at Rahway, New Jersey, whose bones he had kept ever since in a writing desk with a false bottom, in his own house—they grinned again, but this time they writhed and twisted as they grinned.

In the mean time all parties were at work at their polling places. In all the lower region of the city the battle went smoothly; the voters dropped in one by one, as to a party, with their notes of invitation in their hands, and quietly deposited their ballots, and passed away. Further up, and nearer the heart of the city, where life may be supposed to be more rampant and furious, there were constant outbreaks, little playful jets, all day long.

As these bubbled up from time to time and burst, fragments of timber, branches of oak and hickory, were thrown out with such violence and spirit, as to send voters of a peaceful turn of mind trotting up the sloping streets which lead from this infested region; and when such voters chanced to be of a respectable bulk and tonnage, they were watched with no little curiosity and interest by lookers-on who stood at the top, and saw with what pain and anxiety, and redness of face, they toiled up.

In another ward the poll had been constructed and arranged a good deal on the principle of a puzzle, which the voters frequenting there were required, as an agreeable day's pastime, to solve. First, you had to go through a long blind hall, from the street; then out into a yard; then up a flight of stairs, through a long dark room; and then up a ladder, when, in an apartment so small that its inmates must have been got in by legerdemain, you had the pleasure of meeting three gentlemen—two of them, who approved of the juggle which had been set by their own party, smiling cheerfully—behind their green box, ready to wait upon you.

Here was a delightful recreation for aged gentlemen of inactive habits, and delicate young gentlemen in tight-strapped pants; an admirable device, and it worked well, for the plotters polled two votes to one—as they had a great run of sailors from a government vessel in the harbor, in the morning, all on their side, and quite as spirited an accession of lamp-lighters in the afternoon.

But it was at the East river poll where Puffer Hopkins labored, that the struggle was steadiest and fiercest; it was the tie ward, where parties had in the previous election cast an equal vote, and the whole city now hung anxiously upon its returns. The poll was held in an old yellow building, its gable upon the street, and its front facing the river; the voting room was an obscure dark corner, reached by a narrow entry, full of crooks and turns, through an old-fashioned door-way. Around this a great number of voters had lodged the night through, to be in readiness to put in the earliest vote the first day; among them were the lightning-maker, whose uneasy slumbers against the wall had betrayed themselves by incessant cries of "bring the buckets!" and the cobbler, who had not slept a wink, inasmuch as he had been engaged with a one-eyed stone-cutter in an elaborate argument to show that the only debts a man was bound to pay, were his grocer's (a line of business his wife's brother was in), and his shoemaker's. It was a pleasure to Puffer Hopkins to learn that the cobbler—a convert of his own—had deposited the first vote, although with such emphasis as to stave in the cover of the ballot-box, and cause himself to be taken into keeping by a couple of officers, who led him, roaring and remonstrating, to a neighboring watch-house. Before the morning was half spent the election was in full progress; there were men running up and down the streets bringing in voters; others, housed in small wooden booths or cabins, distributing ballots; some declaiming, in high gusty voices; some, farther apart from the throng, calculating the chances of the candidates; and others, even, who had withdrawn into by-streets in the neighborhood of the poll, plotting the distribution of the offices that would fall to the share of the victorious party. Toward the evening of the first day, to which moment, as commanding the largest throng of spectators, he had reserved himself, Mr. Blinker came upon the ground, attended by two or three hangers-on and runners, and looking very grand and decisive. There was an extraordinary severity in his look; although his coat, a faded chocolate, was something the worse for wear, and a thought or two below the usual style of the president. This was odd; but presently it began to be whispered about, as all eyes were fixed upon it, that this identical chocolate garment was the cast coat of a distinguished senator of the United States, who had lately made a triumphant tour through the city. It was soon discovered, too, that the

neck-stock which Mr. Blinker now wore was of the very same sable and satin texture as that worn by his eminent model on that occasion. Mr. Blinker had made influence with the great man; and this was the result. As he was watched, moving down the walk majestically making gracious nods and recognitions on either hand, it occurred to the lookers-on that Mr. B. emulated not a little the gait and manner, and assumed, as nearly as was attainable, the voice of the illustrious senator. The spectacle was imposing but not conclusive; two loafers, to be sure, bailed the air with their hats with such vehemence as to drive the bottoms out; but the effect of this was entirely destroyed by a couple of ragged young rascals, who had been put forward, clinging to his chocolate skirts, and whining out the paternal appellation, till they were dragged off by main force, amid the shouts of the mob, "That's a cruel wretch!" "What a unfeelin' father!" and so forth.

While Mr. Blinker spent his time in this way, strutting about the poll—it was his native ward, and he had a pride in sticking to it—his antagonist, Mr. Gallipot, honest Peleg Gallipot, was all over town, in his paint-dress, making interest, shaking hands, chewing, smoking, drinking, as though he had been fifty men instead of one. The Gallipot hacks and stages rushed about, with great linen flags streaming to the wind, as though the horses had votes as well as the half-drunken gentlemen inside, and were anxious to get them in. Puffer Hopkins, for one, was everywhere; haranguing; folding tickets; diving into committee-rooms; arguing on the kerb; was at every man's ear; had every man by the hand. He seemed to have multiplied himself; every third carriage-door that opened, lo! out popped Puffer, leading by the hand a couple of misty sailors; a superannuated old man; a quaker that hadn't voted for nineteen years, or some other wonder and miracle.

The first day closed; and at night the Gallipots and Blinkerites repaired to their respective quarters for an irregular canvass of the result. The Gallipot party met in the upper chamber of the poll, of which, as the party at present in power, they had possession; and their meeting was sufficiently promiscuous and piebald. Along benches fronting the raised platform, were seated, cheek by jowl, gentlemen in fine beaver hats, and tatterdemalions, with no covering but their own matted and discordant locks; some in broadcloth coats of the latest cut, and some in jackets that, judging by their texture and complexion, seemed to have been fashioned out of sweeps' blankets. The room was full, so full that it overflowed, a loafer or two, upon the stairs; and two or three men who occupied the platform, and who had watched the progress of the voting, down stairs, through the day, called over by turn, a list of voters which they held in their hands. As they called, some one or other in the crowd would answer for each name, "good," "bad,"



"doubtful," as the case might be; the answer being given by such as supposed themselves familiar with the way of thinking and political turn of the person called. This proceeding was kept up till the roll was finished; which was no sooner done, than an ambitious young gentleman, who had stood at the doorway watching its close, rushed off as special express and postboy, to carry the result to Fogfire hall, where it was waited for with much anxiety. Two or three speeches of a highly inflammatory character were delivered—the meeting broke up—and the first day's work was over.

The sun, which had been in a fine mood all the first day, shining like a great eye into all corners of the city, warming voters into life, rolled up the sky, on the morning of the second, apparently as good-humored as ever. The Blinkerites were delighted; they were the fair-weather party, and their well-dressed voters poured in in a steady stream for a couple of hours or better; but when, toward noon, a large, ill-looking cloud came looming along from the northwest, they began to grow gloomy, and sundry of the Bottom leaders walked round the corner and shook hands on the prospect of a good pelting shower.

It was a false alarm; the cloud, a mere gust of wind, passed off; the Blinkerites brightened up wonderfully. The tide was running strong and deep in their favor; two to one, at least, entering the boxes on their side. Troops of nice-looking gentlemen were hurrying in; gentlemen of doubtful politics were going over every minute. Blinker was standing against a great empty hogshead, on the corner, dividing the offices to his friends, who were gathered round him in large numbers, in advance. Ever since the cloud had blown over (which to be sure they couldn't help), the Bottomites had been horribly cast down. What was to be done? Just then there was a shuffling of feet in the neighborhood of the poll; a tumult in the entry; the crowd outside looked in—there were officers' staves crossing and clashing in the hall; great brawny arms raised and brought down with wonderful vigor—bodies pushed about—and presently the whole melee came tumbling into the street. The Gallipot leaders rubbed their hands and chuckled; *they* knew what it meant. A detachment of the Bottom Club had been concealed under the stairway of the hall, all the morning, lying in wait for an opportunity (in the meantime, amusing their leisure by tripping up as many inconsiderate Blinker voters as they could as they passed in) for a decisive demonstration. They, like their friends without, had formed good hopes of the shower; but when the air cleared up so brightly and provokingly, they could restrain themselves no longer. A cat-call had been given, certain members of the fraternity had forced their way in at the back-door of the polling-room, others from the neighboring bar, and, first crowning the officers in attendance, they had distributed themselves

about the hall and engendered the tumult—one of their little plans for reorganising and reforming society—which gave such unmixed satisfaction to their out-of-door friends. This blow was a decisive one; the timid and peace-affecting Blinkerites kept aloof; and although the Blinkerite leaders came upon the ground in the afternoon, in tarpaulin hats and shag roundabouts, it was impossible to recover themselves. When the poll was shut, it was admitted on all hands that they had run behind, a hundred at least. There was another meeting for a canvass, which differed from the other in no respect, save that in its very midst, a great political calculator, rushing in breathless from his own house, where he had been casting up the question, averred that they were to have, unless their friends made superhuman exertions to-morrow (notwithstanding present flattering prospects), a majority of only twenty-five, with a floating prospect of three more if the weather proved foul. He staked his head on this result. Another express was run to Fogfire hall; sundry speeches of a still more excitable quality delivered; and the meeting dispersed, feverish and resolute.

The third day brought unexpected relays from all quarters. The halt, the blind, the feeble, the asthmatic—came wheezing, and hobbling, and tottering, and groping their way to the poll. Some poor scarecrows that appeared to have been mouldering away for years, in their piecemeal garments, in out-of-the-way holes and corners, were led in by the hand, and stood around as though they had been just dug out. Others, reeking and bloated, with lack-lustre eyes, appeared before the green boxes, and voted in the same manner as they would have called for a twopenny pint of spirits.

The caldron had been stirred to its bottom, and its very dregs were floating up. Those that now voted were stragglers, coming in one by one; but presently, a sharp-eyed looker-on might have discovered that a more steady stream was setting in, of a somewhat similar class. This was Mr. Finch's second detachment (his first had finished their work in the various wards, stealthily, the two previous days), his Island volunteers, who entered the polls at intervals, deposited their votes and quietly withdrew beyond reach of the officers' eyes as soon as possible—going in, that was Mr. Finch's device, most frequently on the arm of some gentleman of known character, who lent his responsibility for the purpose, and sharing his good character at the ballot-box. One of them, a notorious pickpocket, but who had chalked his face deeply enough to get for himself the sympathy of being a gentleman in ill health, had even tottered in, leaning on the shoulder of a little parson of an earnest partisan disposition.

Sometimes, as it happened more than once, when the volunteer firemen of Blinker politics gathered in any considerable number about the poll, waiting to put in their vote, a violent fire-



alarm would happen to be rung out from a neighboring market, which soon sent them scampering away; a fire in New York taking precedence of a funeral, an election, and everything else, but an invitation to a hanging inside of the prison yard. For these alarms, the Bottomites were indebted to the bell-ringer of their club, who lingered about the market, pulling the bell at opportune moments, of which he was advised by a trusty messenger sent down from the poll. The excitement deepened as the day advanced; quidnuncs and inquirers came hurrying in from every direction, to learn how the contest was going.

As the day approached its close the creed of the two parties broadened; their promises and professions became more frequent and more liberal; their affection for the poor—which he most readily reached by such devices—more devoted and fraternal. One party threw out the suggestion that a poor man should have *two* votes, in consideration of the hardships and disadvantages of his lot. This the drummers and declaimers of the other party answered by suggesting that if gentlemen—gentlemen of means and ability—had the disposition they professed to serve the poor, why didn't they give 'em rooms in their three-story houses, with clean basins and towels and plenty to eat? Advancing in this way, in their proclamations and professions, they at last became so comprehensive in their philanthropy, that certain poverty-stricken and simple-minded gentlemen, who stood by listening with greedy ear, flattered themselves that they and their families were as good as provided for, for the ensuing year, and went in and voted for one ticket or another, according as they preferred the fare, lodgings, and accommodations held out by either party.

The concourse about the poll had swelled steadily for hours; the street was full; the windows of the neighborhood were packed close with heads and faces; every lookout place of the headquarters itself, to the very roof, was occupied by men, women, and children, looking eagerly down, and watching the progress of the contest. There was a great lumber-pile hard by, and this, too, the crowd had climbed, and now swarmed about its top. As the sun went down, the crowd swayed to and fro, and there were certain persons in it who seemed to rock it back and forth as they would a cradle, when suddenly surging, with a terrible impulse against the wall, it burst its way into the house, and there was a cry that the ballot-boxes were in danger. In a minute the officers came hurrying, pale-faced, into the street, where they were tossed about in the crowd, the black-and-white tops of their staves floating about like so many fishing-droppers; the mob swarmed in at the windows, over the back fence, through the hall (last of all), and the polling-room was in a trice completely overrun.

At this moment Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, who had prevailed on two or three sturdy men to lift him on their shoulders, stood up, as well as

he could with such support, and removing his hat, from which a cloudy shower of newspapers fell, presented his face at the broken fanlight of the entry-door. His hands were lifted up in supplication, and his look was an imploring one. It was some time before he could get a hearing.

"Gentlemen, I do beseech you, I entreat and implore you, as you value your characters as citizens and as men, to restrain yourselves." From the imperfect character of the support on which he depended, Mr. Fishblatt's observations were extremely irregular in their delivery; one being given, as was this, with his face at the window, and the next being entirely lost in the wood-work behind which his head descended. "I would ask any gentleman here," remarked Mr. Fishblatt, when he came up again, "if he keeps a snuff-box? Did he value his privileges? There were a couple of thousand persons in that crowd, as far as he could judge, three children to each; there was a spectacle, was it not? The rights and immunities of six thousand of the rising generation hazarded by the present outrageous outbreak." He went down again for a few minutes. "The ballot-box, gentlemen," continued Mr. Fishblatt, on his reappearance, "is the ark of our safety; it's the foundation of our institutions, board, lodging, and two suits a-year to all of us. What would we be without the sacred ballot-box? Where would stand your City hall? Where the old Sugar house in Liberty street? Where the Fourth of July? Where the immortal names of Perry and Hamilton? Where?"

He went down again; this time for good, for his supporters, learning that the inspectors had got off with their boxes through a by-gate into the next yard, and so from one yard to another, to a place of safety, had withdrawn, and Mr. Fishblatt was permitted to fall like a half-risen balloon, among the crowd. The crowd, who had given but little heed to Mr. Fishblatt's appeal, finding there was no further sport going forward, gradually broke up and dispersed. The election was at an end; the great contest determined one way or the other.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE END OF LEYCRAFT.

Poor Leycraft! The belief which his repentant soul had cherished for years, lay dead at his heart. One by one every hope had crumbled. The boy, such was the conviction each unanswering face pressed upon him, the boy was dead. To that pale young form, cold and deathward, as to him it always lay stretched in the wood, there was no resurrection. It was gone into another world, and seemed dragging him, by a gentle violence he could not resist, after. The remorse which, though sometimes

torpid, had been never entirely subdued, uncoiled itself more and more, and pierced him with strokes which caused him to cry aloud with anguish. He could not be silent nor at ease. He had fled from house to house, lodging to lodging, where the horrible secret he was constantly urged to babble, caused men and women to fall away from his presence like that of one sick with the plague. Even in cellars and cheap resorts, where the language of crime and wrong is a familiar dialect, they avoided his conversation, and begged him, in God's name, to ease his soul to parsons and magistrates, and not to them. Even the grim ten-pin-player had deserted him. Leycraft's constant wakings at the dead of night, and the dreadful reproaches with which his soul labored against itself, were too much for him. So he flew from place to place; from employment to employment. He tried, and in vain, to quell his unhappy thoughts, to cheat himself of that dreadful belief of the boy's death, by a constant change of work. He was now alone, in a rope-walk, where Ishmael Small's prying ubiquity had found him. The walk was a long, low-roofed shed. It was pitched in a hollow, on the outskirts of the city, and was out of sight of human habitation, and beyond the sound of human voice. About it nothing but rank grass and odious weeds, thick with thorns and death-white blossoms, grew and pressed forward to the very door. On either side the shed was pierced with small narrow windows, its whole length, looking out on one hand, on a sluggish vein of water that oozed through the hard soil, and on the other, upon the field of shrubs and brambles. Here Leycraft, at the earliest hour of the day—it was just sunrise, and the sun, striking the shed on its eastern end, filled the walk with shadows—stood, his beard untrimmed, and his waist encompassed with unworked flax, giving him the appearance of a satyr.

He stood at the remotest end and looked down its whole dark length, with an eye which grew blank and unsettled when it found nothing to rest upon. Then it passed from window to window back again, more blank than ever; no friendly face looked in, not even the miserable picker who used to beg the refuse flax and ropes' ends. He would have given the world if only Ishmael had come and taunted him in the old fashion. And then, with something of prayer and earnest imploring in his features, he shot his glance into a corner, where two wrens had held their nest for years, borrowing tow and threads of twine from the floor to build. The two wrens were gone. Not a sparrow nor a fly crossed the unlucky window-sills. A dread stillness was present, resting like a cloud upon the roof and thickening the air. The very walk seemed to have gone into decay; it tottered and shook like one in a palsy, as the silent winds hurried past. What wonder if Leycraft's soul was appalled within him?

"Lightnings blast me!" he muttered, struggling against the feeling that crept upon him, and made him cold to the heart; "what do they mean by leaving me here? Why don't the sharks and indefatigables come and take me and hang me?" Here he cast a sideways look at the rope he had begun to twist. "I wish they'd send out the green wagon and treat me to a ride to the Tombs. Why don't they? What do they mean? They don't know their duty—that's plain. I ought to be kept in a cell till this cursed fever's gone off; and then I should be hung out to dry." He laughed at the fancy; but it was a wretched, soulless laugh, which betrayed him more than his words. His thoughts took a new turn, and, catching his breath, in the surprise with which another and deeper purpose than that of yielding his body to the magistrates glided into his mind, he went on now faster than ever with his task; drawing out the flax with a secret satisfaction—as he paced backward along the hard, cold floor—every now and then putting forth his whole strength, and twisting the strands as firm and close as iron. It was wonderful with what care and skill he framed his work, choosing the cleanest flax in all the bunch, where there was no spot nor blemish—his eye, in its supernatural keenness, could have detected a flyblow—shaping each strand delicately to an equal size, and twisting them all so cleanly together, that the cord, as fast as formed, was admirably round and firm, and not a thread or fibre hung loose. There was a strange pleasure in Leycraft's look when he saw how well he prospered in his work; but even in the midst of his task a shudder came upon him; his face grew dark and livid by turns; and his eyes wandered about and seemed to dwell on a terrible and appalling company that was present only to him. For a time his hands refused to do the service to which they had been constrained, and struggled against it, as if they too were endowed with a fearful consciousness. In this pause and agitation of his spirit, he searched his garments, and brought forth from his breast-pocket, a small, square parcel, which he proceeded, tremblingly, to open, fixing his eyes more keenly and steadily as each envelope was removed. His hand at length held disclosed a half-bracelet, with its clasp; and while he regarded it he shuddered anew, and writhed as in sudden pain. What was he to do with this? He could not bear it about with him longer—it seemed too like the child's voice whispering in his ear; frail tress as it was, it held him fast, as a cable, to the spot where the deed had been done; its brassy clasp glared upon him like a serpent's eye. It seemed to him now like the dead boy's legacy—for he had taken it almost from his hand; carrying with it, at all seasons of day and night, its own avenging conditions. What was to be done with it? At this moment, and while the question demanded, every minute, an answer more loudly, a shrunken and troubled face looked in

at one of the windows of the walk. It was the face of an old man, who, full of an anguish different—ah! how different, from that of Leycraft—had wandered in the suburbs, many days, and many weary, weary nights, too, and who had strayed, in the vacancy that had come upon him, to that place. It was Hobbleshank; who, when he had gathered thought to peruse the person before him more closely, and saw what unearthly look had settled in his features—how white, and trenched with deep, dark lines as it was, like a scarred coffin-plate it seemed—recoiled from the window, and gave signs of retreating altogether.

“For Heaven’s good sake!” cried Leycraft, in a tone of anguish that went to the old man’s heart, “don’t leave me now. Stay only an hour or so, if not so long, five minutes may do; five minutes, at least. Come, come, you’ll give me five minutes!”

The old man returned to the window, but resisted steadily all entreaty to come in.

“This is cruel!” said Leycraft, aloud, and then, partly to himself, “the last man with whom I shall change word; and he won’t give me his company as a Christian, but stands there gazing through a window on me, as if I were a wild beast at a show.”

At that moment, Leycraft, who had bent down while uttering these words to himself, raised his head and caught the eye of the old man—his neck stretched forward its utmost length—fastened on the bracelet which he held in his open hand. He caught it back at once, and restoring it quickly to its enclosure, thrust it into his breast.

There was something fearful in that old man’s face, now that the light fell upon it;—it was the very face that had watched him all through the night, in the garret of the farmhouse, and against which he had contended. This was another blow that staggered him on swifter to his fate. He went on stranding and coiling the rope, holding every feature rigid, and bracing his nerves with all his will, lest his purpose should give way. The cord was finished. Leycraft rose up, wiped his brow, on which a cold, thick sweat had gathered—went to the window, and while Hobbleshank could not move in his surprise, he placed in his hand the parcel he had concealed.

“There,” said he, “take that; it’s a bequest from a man that will never know man more. It’s the gift of a young friend, the dearest I ever had, and I wish you’d make much of it.”

He then proceeded, without another word, to put every utensil of the walk in its place; coiled up the rope he had made with so much care, in the crown of his hat; closed the windows, leaving Hobbleshank without, lost in vague wonder and alarm; drew to the door, and putting the key in a safe concealment, where the other workmen might find it when they came—as they would in an hour or two—he withdrew from the walk, which was now dark, and close as a tomb. He shaped his way

toward the river, looking back not once, but choosing the obscurest paths and bye-ways, and following them steadily. Once he leaped a wall, and crouching as he ran, he skirted along the fence for half a mile or more, and then he got into an untravelled road, where he made good speed, and with a comfort—such comfort as his condition allowed—to himself. In leaving this he was forced to pass a public way where there was a constant throng of travel; and, while in act of crossing, hearing the rattling of wheels from the city, he fled into a blackberry meadow, and there lay hid in the bushes for better than an hour.

He was now within sight of the woods; and when, emerging from his ambush, his eye first fell upon them, he shrunk back, and his feet for a moment refused to bear him on. It was an instant only; and then he laughed to himself at his folly in spoiling the good gait he had been travelling.

At the woods—the black, dull, hemlock woods, which lay like a dark stain upon the earth—he did not enter at a point which would bear him soonest to the place he sought; but fetched a circuit of better than a furlong, and looking about him with a trembling eye, he crept into them, as if by stealth. The sun had not yet made good his strength, and the woods still swarmed with bats and birds of darkness, which kept about, and shut back the light by the wide-spread wings with which they oppressed the air. Under foot the ground was heavy with a sluggish sweat, rather than dew, and through blind paths and among tufts of useless grass, Leycraft picked his way; winding about in long circles, and only approaching the spot by degrees. His eyes wandered between the trees, as though a phantom were walking just before him; if he had cast a look upward but once, he would have seen how blue and peaceful was the sky above him—but this he heeded not. He had come to the edge of a by-path that cut through the woods; in a minute more and he would be on the very spot itself. He paused and sat upon a fallen trunk to gather his strength. What he had done and what he was to do came upon him in all their hideousness, and his heart misgave him. He would have retreated if he could. At that moment he heard a step approaching; a man passed by, and as Leycraft looked out, oh how his soul begged and implored that he would come and reason with him, and steal from his heart the purpose which clung like a dagger in its very core! The cold sweat stood upon his brow, in the agony with which he was moved. The man bore in his hand a walking-stick, with which, with a determined look, he smote a tall weed that grew in the path, to the ground. There was clearly no hope for Leycraft. He sprang up, and almost at a bound, stood upon the earth where, more than twenty years ago, he had cast down a young child, as he would a frail vessel, that all its life might be spilled and never gathered up again. He knew the

place—knew it at once, down to the smallest blade that grew about. The rock was there, under the lee of which the basket that held the child had been set; the old gnarled branch stretched over it—older now than when it shook its young summer leaves upon the ground. Every circumstance and incident of the act rushed back into his mind with a fearful distinctness. How he had borne the child from the farm-house in his arms—the very look of the nurse who had intrusted it to him in the belief that a little air would be so reviving and refreshing to the poor dear—how, when he heard the laugh and prattle of young children at play in an orchard through which he passed, he had repented of any part in the deed—and how, again, when he bethought him of the rage of the broker, and the spite he would wreak on him through the debtor's jail, he had hurried on. There was one good thought, too, that came back: that when he had laid the child where he was to be left to die—for his soul refused to do it rougher violence—he had lifted a leaf, shed by the overhanging branch upon its little lips, so giving it another chance to live. He remembered, too, how he had severed the bracelet about its neck, in twain, taking one of its parts and leaving the other, with the hope that the child, should it live to escape its perilous exposure, might be recognised and reclaimed.

As he was pondering, the dead child seemed to spring from the ground, rising slowly upon him, and growing rigid in every limb as he rose, until he stood regarding him with a fixed stony eye, his little arm stretched toward him in menace, more terrible than if it had been a mailed hand aimed against his breast. He staggered before it. The wind, which had been gathering since sunrise, swept through the wood with a howl like that of an angry populace. Leycraft, whose face and brow dripped with sweat, and whose body was as chill and comfortless as if it had been steeped in the river, cast a fearful glance behind him, and snatching off his hat in desperate haste, he stepped upon the rock, and made fast an end of the cord to the old branch, which the tree held out like a withered arm toward him. The tree creaked—there was an awful groan, and the forfeit was paid. At that moment a crow flew screeching from a neighboring tree-top straight through the wood, and, as it rose toward the clouds that lowered on its flight, it seemed like the dark spirit of the man, on its way to the angry heaven whose judgment he had dared to invoke.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### HOBBLESHANK'S RETURN.

UPON the ground where he had fallen in the shock of surprise and bewilderment, Hobbleshank

sat, with the trinket in his hand, which seemed to hold him spell-bound and motionless. As he recovered his powers, and was aware of the gift in his charge, he would have shouted to Leycraft, and called him back, but, when he looked in the direction he had taken, Leycraft was out of sight.

The clasp was discolored as if often held in a damp hand; but the tress, its other part, was fresh and bright, in its auburn hues, as when first set in its place; and as he turned it over and over again, his tears fell fast upon it, for he knew well—who could mistake it?—the sweet brow, now lying in the earth, from which it had been shorn. Then he recalled what the strange man had said. "It's the gift of a young friend, the dearest I ever had, and I wish you'd make much of it!" He repeated them over and over again. Yes, those were the words. And then a hope came floating into his mind that was like a new life and air to all his powers; a hope that filled his heart with a genial noon, in which all old despondencies, and sorrows, and sadnesses, shrunk away, and left him glad and happy, beyond measure. The boy—his child—his young self—so the words gave him warrant—was not dead. He had lived to be the companion of grown men; to be with them, and with them share friendship and intimacies. So he construed what Leycraft had said. He bounded up, and choosing out the fairest of all the roads, he took his way to the city. It was a green path; and the trees, which had stepped to the road-side from a neighboring wood, for that very purpose, bent over the traveller, and whispered peace and a pleasant journey to him. Then he came to bare fences, along which the small-eyed birds hopped and twittered, making merry with the old man as he came galloping along. After this, there was an open tract of sky and field about which the swallows flew swiftly, writing their names in the air, and tying all sorts of hard knots as they skimmed along, backward and forward, and up and down.

At the pace with which he speeded on, he was soon in the edge of the city. The bells, for some reason or other, were ringing a quick peal; if they had been the voices of angels hovering in the air, they could not have sounded more sweetly to Hobbleshank.

He came to a park or square, in which children were at play, and bursting through a gate, he borrowed from a little blue-eyed lad—who yielded it partly in fear, partly in love—the hoop on which he was resting—the old man sprang away like the youngest of them all, and, in the madness of his new hope, drove it round and round the park, humming to himself, "It's the gift of a young friend, the dearest I ever had, and I wish you'd make much of it!" Leaving the park, with thanks to his young friend, whom he had caught in his arms and blessed with kisses that exploded like so many squibs through the place, he rambled breathless, but by no means wearied, into a great

thoroughfare. Here he found new objects to feed his rapture. There were caps and canes, and dainty little Wellington-boots in the shops, in which the haughtiest parent, the show-bill said, might be proud to see his son eating ices and walking Broadway.

How often, ah, how often, during his twenty years of sore trial and anguish, had the old man rambled from window to window, from shop-door to shop-door, choosing a little blue-tasselled cap at one, a pearl-tipped cane at another, and the jauntiest pair of Wellingtons he could pitch his eye upon at another—and, in his fancy, arraying the boy who should have been so apparelled, and at that moment walking, with a little hand in his, at his side! He had so taken the child from the day he was lost, and carried him forward, in imagination, through all the stages of childhood and youth, up to the manhood, where, if but now living, he would have arrived.

He well remembered the very day on which the child had attained his quizzical, bird-like swallow-tail, which the doating old man had picked out and even bargained for, months before. Pondering upon these old pleasures, his feet had brought him, almost without the guidance of his will, to a door in a by-street, the red and yellow board over which denoted that a select school for children was kept within.

He opened the gate, the trick of which he knew well, walked through a paved alley, and turning in at a door half way up, was in the very heart and bosom of the select school at once. The select schoolmistress—his old friend and who knew his humor well—was seated in a well-worn rocker in the middle of her little room, arrayed in her plain neat gown and cap, her book open on her lap, her arms folded upon her breast, and watching, with a kindly look, through her great glasses, the efforts of a tiny white-haired child, to master the twenty-sixth letter of the alphabet. Hobbleshank laid off his hat, took his seat at the side of the mistress, who had not even turned when he came in, although the whole row of little scholars stared in a line from the bench on which they were fixed against the wall. They all knew the old man, but it was so long now since he had been at the school, that they could not avoid a welcome with their looks. What a tuneful nest, embowered in its obscure corner, had that little school been to him! How his eye had ranged, as his finger would on a musical instrument, along the class, beginning at the least and youngest, and sounding his way up, fancying each in turn to be his child and son. They had caught his look and loved him for it. His joy was too overflowing, too much in excess, to admit of his tarrying long there or anywhere; and so, leaving a tribute of goodwill in the mistress's hand, to be distributed among the scholars, and begging in her ear for a half-holiday for the school, he broke away and was in the street again.

Even the three gilt balls which hung dan-

gling over the broker's door in the street through which he hurried, and which used to look so hideous to him, now seemed to have a gleam of sunshine and promise in them. There was another street, the next to his, through which he could not fail to pass. Here, years before, he had formed an intimacy, a very close and friendly intimacy, with a clothier's block which stood at the corner (to be sure it had no head, your finely-dressed gentlemen rarely have), swelling and expanding its breast in all the splendors of a blue frock and pantaloons, with a handsome white vest and ruffles to match. The intimacy lasted six months, during which the old man had paid a daily visit to his silent friend, when it was abruptly broken off, because Hobbleshank was quite sure his son must by that time have outgrown garments of that gentleman's cut and dimensions.

Farther on, and still nearer the heart of the city, Hobbleshank, hurrying along in a joyous mood—he had directed his feet that way—came upon a house in which, even at broad day, there was a sound of music, a throng of carriages at the door, and the very house itself palpitating and quaking with the pulses of the gay dance that was going on within. The old man had a good heart to join in on the very flagging where he stood, for the house and he were old and early friends. Far back in that past time, whence dated, in two directions, all his joys and sorrows, it had been Aunt Gatty's; there it was that Hobbleshank had first met his young wife; there had been wedded to her; and there had spent many a joyous night, when the world was young with him, and when even old Aunt Gatty had wealth and kind words more at command than now. As he stood by the door, gossiping with the drivers and other loungers—gathering what he could of the story of the wedding that was going forward, and comparing it as he went along with the circumstances of his own—his heart reproached him for tarrying there, and withholding his good fortune from his two kind old friends at home. Casting a bright half-dollar upon the ground—where he left the coachmen, who had been for a long time scant of calls, scrambling for it—he hurried away. At the good speed with which he moved, and by dint of running in and out—from street to pavement, from pavement to street—not less than forty times, he was in no very long time at his own door, which he confessed to himself had something of an outlandish look, now that he had been absent from it so long.

Bursting in to declare his news, he was arrested in the very mid-career of his exultation, by a deep moan, proceeding from the corner of the chamber. Looking thither he was inexpressibly shocked, and stood rooted at the very threshold. In the corner of the room, close in the remotest angle of the hearth, bent nearly double (ten years at least older in her look than when he had left her), and gazing into vacancy, sat Aunt Gatty, clad in deep mourning,

even to her small crimped cap, which, jet-black and fitted closely to her head, gave to her features a pale and deathly aspect. At her side stood Dorothy, tending on her in some office suited to her condition, and striving to sooth her with words of solace and comfort.

The aged woman refused to be comforted, and thrust her companion away from her, constantly ejaculating, "He is dead—dead; and I am the unlucky woman that killed him. Is this the way that I fulfilled a deathbed trust? God! oh, blessed God!" and here she moaned and pined as in an agony that wrung her very soul. "Deal gently with me for this—it was not my wish—he would go forth; but then, I should have held him back, even by force. Oh, my dear, kind playfellow—now in heaven—is this the way I have kept my promise? Look not in God's book of records and see what is against Gatty—your Gatty, you loved to call me. Plague me no more, Dorothy, I have slain the poor old man; go away, in Heaven's name, and let me die. Go away."

Then, while Dorothy stood by, weeping and wringing her hands over this mournful wreck, the aged woman fell away into vacancy, awaking only every now and then to utter a deep moan, and renew her complaint.

Hobbleshank, who had regarded all these goings-on with a bewildered look, could restrain himself no longer, but, hurrying forward, stood before them—his hat a little to one side, where he had fixed it that his friends might know at a glance what mood he was in, and the great square breastpin, shining like an illumination in the front of his bosom. He stood before them—his doubtful eye closed hard, and the other opened in full blaze upon them, a smile on his face, and a hand extended to each. In this extraordinary costume and posture it was some time before even Dorothy was willing to acknowledge him; and even after she had admitted it was Hobbleshank and no counterfeit—there remained his right hand, still extended, waiting to be grasped by Aunt Gatty. It was a long time before Aunt Gatty was willing to look at him; and when she did, at length, turn her head slowly about and take measure of his person, she regarded him with infinite scorn and repulsion.

"It's a cheat," she said, after a long survey, and a longer pondering, "you are practising upon me; this is not my old friend that I am to account for; no, no! Don't you think I know my good friend Hobbleshank? This is some one that has stolen his garments and is trying to play tricks with me." She returned to her old posture, and could be brought by no persuasion or entreaty to a further recognition.

"We must leave her to herself," said Dorothy, drawing Hobbleshank apart; "you will get back into her recollection by degrees. It takes days with her now to fix and unfix a notion. She will presently fall asleep."

They watched her for a little while, when slumber, coming in to befriend exhausted na-

ture, crept upon her, and bearing her to her bed within, and laying her gently to rest, they returned to the other chamber. Hobbleshank, reviving rapidly from the gloom which Aunt Gatty had cast upon his spirits, took a place by a small table that Dorothy had drawn out, and launched forth in a glowing description of the good luck on which he had so lately stumbled. Dorothy, who could not share in all the good hopes which he built on the disclosure of the stranger and the possession of the half-bracelet, did, nevertheless, strengthen and encourage Hobbleshank to go on in these communications, by a cold ham, which she produced from a closet, where it had stood untasted and inviting the knife for several days; and also by calling in—through the ministry of a ragged-haired and bare-footed girl, who was always on the prowl for small errands in the great hall—a pot of Albany-brewed and two dozen oysters, which, the last being well peppered and swallowed at a snap, added not a little to the spirit of the old man's narration.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### A NOTABLE SCHEME OF MR. FYLER CLOSE.

THERE was not a phase of the neighboring sick man's malady, from the day he misbuttoned his coat in the yard—to which pass he was brought, being a tradesman, by the fall of wheat from twenty shillings to ten at a clap—down to that when he was laid shouting on his bed, that Fyler Close had not watched. By the hour he stood at his window—forgetting baker, blacksmith, and haberdasher, in the earnest gaze with which he regarded every turn of the disease, while the patient rambled the yard, in its early stages, or lay strapped upon his couch at its height. The tears, the groans, the whims, the flights and wanderings of the lunatic, were a delicious banquet to Fyler. He meant to cut with a weapon of double edge, and this sharpened it, both sides at once. The deed was found—there could be no question of that—which helped Hobbleshank back into the farm-house whence Fyler had dislodged him, by a master-stroke, many years ago. Should he succeed in recovering possession, there would be a long and heavy arrear of rents to be returned. This would never do. The boy, to be sure, must be found—must be proved to be alive. Notwithstanding the bold and hardy face with which he gave out that such as would find the child must grope in the earth, digging deep, an uneasy conviction that he lived kept crowding into his mind. Vague rumors to this effect, traceable to no clear source, it is true, had from time to time prevailed. He knew of Leycraft's death; Ishmael had brought in the news the second day after. He had been found on his knees, the branch bent and twisted from its place by an unearthly struggle, his head

turned to one side, as if regarding an object that stood at his side, just behind him—and his hands clasped firmly together.

Fyler, on hearing these circumstances, had merely called the man a fool, wondered he hadn't taken poison, which would have been a quieter death—and dismissed the subject, apparently from his mind. To be sure, he had had an unpleasant vision the night after, in which Leycraft appeared, on his knees, knocking at the door of his closet, and begging, in God's name, to be let in. But what of that? The dream had passed away; and getting up the next morning a quarter of an hour earlier than usual, he opened his door cautiously, and finding no such supplicant there—as, in truth, he had half expected to—he put himself at ease.

Then there was the bracelet, which he knew Leycraft had carried on his person for years, but which Ishmael's stealthy scrutiny had failed to find there now, another clew to the child. The cloud, he confessed to himself, began to thicken a little; and now he meant to clear all obstacles and entanglements at a bound. In a few days the forge was silent; the anvil uttered not so much as a tinkle—the broker had levied his judgment, which had hung dangling, like a great chain, for months over the blacksmith's head: the blacksmith's fire was quenched, and his hammers muffled for ever. A few days more, and the haberdasher—thrifless woman—was forced to send her children out privily to beg; Fyler had swept her shop with a comprehensive bill of sale. The piano in the yellow house had gone gouty in the legs long ago; and was now taken to the hospital in the square, out of a movement of pure benevolence in the bosom of Mr. Close. As to the baker, on a close scrutiny of accounts, the broker, finding a clear balance against himself of four-and-threepence, with a fraction, thought it not expedient to move him just at present. All that remained was the Row, to show to the world that Fyler Close was worth a cent; and Fyler chanted a psalm to the tune of a rattling song he had heard at a cheap place of entertainment when he was a young man, with great spirit, as he chinked the silver in his hand and thought of this. He had finished the psalm, and, getting into a more advanced stage of pleasantry, was striving, with whimsical success, to adapt some common-metre measure that he might recall, to the fitful shouts of his neighbor, when Mr. Small came in, bearing upon his left arm a pile of clothes, hung loosely over, and in his right a crook-necked staff, with which he had thrust the door open, and which he now employed in putting it to again. Upon his head, covering and extinguishing the glory of his own individual cap, rested a straw hat, stretching out before and behind, twisted up convulsively at the sides, and discolored and stained in every strand with sweat. Mr. Small might have been mistaken by a rash observer, at first sight, as he stood

resting on his crook, for a patriarch gone to seed. The broker knew him for what he was, and hailed him at sight.

"This is a melancholy affair, Ishmael," said the broker, shaking his head dolefully.

"It can't be helped?" asked Ishmael, while a lurking smile crept upon his visage.

"I am afraid it can't," rejoined Mr. Close; "I don't see how I can avoid going out of my wits."

"Anyhow, Uncle Fyler," said Ishmael, "I hope for my sake you'll not go so far you can't come back again. You'll be good enough to recollect that."

"It's very painful, though," continued Fyler; "here am I, Ishmael, this morning in full possession of all my faculties, according to human observation, equal to a calculation in compound interest, or the drawing of a mortgage, with extra conditions and policy-clauses—before night what'll I be?"

"I'm afraid to say," said Ishmael, starting back and lifting both hands, as though to shut out a disagreeable vision.

"But I'm not," answered Fyler, twitching his whiskers, "a miserable wreck, an insane rag-picker; what'll be my business? To go about running into gutters, and poking street-pools and rag-heaps—and I shouldn't wonder if it disagreed with me so much as to make me twist my face and beat myself, and do such goings-on that everybody'll say, 'Fyler has lost his reason.'"

"I shouldn't wonder," echoed Mr. Small, and at the prospect of so cheerful a result, presented so vividly, both Fyler and Ishmael broke into a gentle laugh.

"Was he in his right mind always?" asked Fyler, looking up edgewise at Ishmael from where he sat, allowing his glance to rest a moment, in its way, upon the garments over his arm. "Was the owner of these always right?"

"Wonderfully so," answered Ishmael; "the very sanest picker I ever knew. He was a extraordinary chap, that old fellow," pursued Mr. Small, "he would pick a couple of hogs-heads a day, sir, and, with a run, jump over 'em at night, standing on end, as lively as a grasshopper in the first line o' business. He had an ambition above rags, and that was the ruin of him. One morning—it was a lovely one—the baker's winders was all full of smoking rolls and fresh gingerbread, the milk-wagons was on the jump, and the red-cheeked chambermaids puttin' their houses into clean faces, like queens'—our friend goes out in prime spirits to pick a little before breakfast. There was a big heap in Hanover square to be overhauled that afternoon, and the thoughts of that before him put him in such a flow, he could hardly hold in for joy. Well, sir, he was a goin' along all well enough, till he comes to 'Publican alley, and there he balked—he wanted to be an old-clo' man, and there was something up that alley that tempted him worse



than a evil spirit. He couldn't hold back; so up the alley he bolts, leaving his basket (which he begun to be ashamed of), at the mouth; he comes to a airy, a very deep but very delicious airy, too, for there, as he peeps through the railin', he sees that vicious old coat that was to be his undoin', a hangin' in its old place over the back of a chair, close up by the winder; the winder was up—the old chap listened—there was nobody stirrin'—he laid himself close up against the rail, and stretched down his stick till he gets the old feller by the collar, and begins to tug. Tuggin' was fatal work; he was too violent; the gate he was leanin' agin gives way—the gratin' to the coalhole was up—the old chap pitches headlong in, and slidin' on his belly to the very bottom, cracks his neck. There was the vanity of 'spirin' above his sphere! He was a bosom-friend o' mine; and as he forgot to mention me in his will, I bought his hat and trousers and stick and basket, from the crowner's man, for a couple of plugs, to remember him by. They was cheap at that!"

"I wonder if they would fit me, Ishmael—it would be curious to try, wouldn't it?"

The broker lifted the garments gently from Ishmael's arm, displaced the hat, and, possessing himself of the crook and basket, placidly withdrew to his closet, leaving Mr. Small leaning against the casement, his cap jauntily cocked and one leg crossed upon the other, regarding the broker as he withdrew with a look of the profoundest admiration and respect. It was capitally done, that he couldn't deny.

In a few minutes, during which audible laughter, kept pretty well under though, had resounded from the closet, an outlandish figure appeared from its concealments, locking the door carefully behind and thrusting the key in a pocket. It wasn't the broker. Ishmael, unbending from the posture he had maintained, and spreading himself, with a hand on either knee after the manner of a jockey making himself familiar with the points of a horse on show, said it wasn't Fyler Close—he'd stake his life on it—it wasn't Fyler.

The figure moved out upon the floor, as if to give Mr. Small an opportunity to confirm his impressions. They couldn't be shaken; he clung to his first belief. There was the old yellow hat, which helped the face underneath it to a look so small and shrunken; then the roundabout and trowsers, loose and flaunting, and washed by a thousand showers and sweats and stains, out of all color. No reasonable man could have thought of going out of his senses (even from an overgrown coat and short pantaloons), into such an ill-assorted apparel. Moving up and down, the figure, keeping a hard, steady countenance, proceeded to fish with the crooked stick which he carried in his hand, in various sections of the apartment as in imaginary pools, and drew up from time to time supposititious strips of canvass and linen,

which, with great care and skill, he deposited in the bottom of a basket that hung upon his arm. Excellent! Ishmael protested that it brought his friend the picker back so vividly before his mind, that it was as much as he he could do to refrain from shedding tears. After practising in this way for better than a quarter of an hour, the figure came and halted before Ishmael, letting the arm which held the basket fall its full length, and in the other holding the stick—as is the established custom of pickers—with its crook downward, and regarding Mr. Small with melancholy steadiness of visage.

"I'm a poor old man, now, Ishmael," said the old gentleman; "very poor—worth not so much as Mrs. Lettuce. By-the-by, Ishmael, isn't it strange, Mrs. Lettuce has never called for that balance on the mortgage in the master's hand? It was just three shillings and a penny, and it's very wrong in her not to look to it. You should mention it when you see her. It's flying in the face of Providence not to look after her own. Have you seen the poor woman lately, Ishmael?"

Ishmael averred that he had, in the market.

"What did she say, Ishmael—did she seem to bear her fortune meekly?"

"She said," answered Ishmael, who was bursting with suppressed satisfaction at the masterly manner in which the old gentleman was carrying it off—"She said, sir, that you was one of the greatest scoundrels that ever went unhung; that you had robbed her of her radishes, and 'sparagus, and stockings, and money, and character, like a heathen boy-constrictor, she called it; and she'd see, sir, whether she wouldn't have satisfaction out of you yet!"

"I wonder what the poor old woman's living on that makes her so savage?" asked Mr. Close, mildly.

"As far as I can learn," answered Ishmael, "for the last fortnight on b'iled turnip-tops—not such a very violent species of food."

"Where does she get boiled turnip-tops, I'd like to know?" asked Mr. Close, whose eyes began to gleam a little.

"They're given to her by her old friends in the market," replied Ishmael; "but they've cut off the supply, at last—it spilt the sale. She'll beg a couple of weeks more, with an old cloak and red handkercher, they all say, and then she'll go to the almshouse."

"The best thing the poor creature can do," said Fyler; "I thought so long ago. She'll be much more comfortable there than out of doors blabbing secrets and ripping up old stories of no use to any one."

The interview with Mr. Small concluded, the broker saying that he had a heavy day's work before him—four squares and better than a dozen streets to scour—pulled open the door, and went forth—Ishmael following at a distance.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## THE BURNING OF CLOSE'S ROW.

At day-wages the broker could not have toiled more painfully. Early and late he was busy, with stick and basket, in alley, highway, and thoroughfare. He groped every kennel, and questioned every heap in the ward. After a shower he might be seen hovering about the street-pools like a buzzard. If he had been a picker from infancy he could not have driven his trade with more diligence. He was especially careful to ply his business where he would fall under the eye of certain gentlemen, pointed out to him by the vigilance of Mr. Small, as possessing a talent for observation, and an obliging disposition in coming forward, which would render them very useful in the event of any little matter of Mr. Close's being brought before the courts. This was a class of sharp-eyed small tradesmen, who were always in their doors, or at the corner, or coming through a street, or passing to a ferry, or doing something or other which enabled them to be eye-witnesses of more than half the stage-accidents, brawls, frays, and other street-incidents of the whole city. As Fyler passed the doors of these vigilant observers, he would place his basket on the ground, his crook lying across it, and proceed to rap his forehead with great violence with his knuckles; which performance over, he would take up his basket and proceed to his work, knocking his brow steadily through the day, at the rate of about three dozen knocks to a square. There was, among his prospective witnesses, one in particular—a dealer in crockery—of such an extremely acute turn of mind, as to have been known, in a case of manslaughter, tried at the Oyer and Terminer, to have seen the blow struck, standing in his own shop-door and looking through two bow-windows to the other side of a corner where the affray had happened; identifying the prisoner by the color of his hair. There was a valuable man for Mr. Close! and when he came along the front of his shop the knocking was very violent and long-continued, and varied by a succession of lively leaps over the basket, back and forth, as it stood upon the ground.

Ishmael, in the meantime, performed the part cast to him, by happening in the neighborhoods where Fyler plied his calling, and taking occasion to point him out to various doctors, as a worthy old gentleman (reduced in circumstances), a little beside himself, and whom he would be sorry to see committing any violence, such as braining a child or the like. They had furnished him with certificates of his condition, and, learning that he was a friend of the poor old gentleman's, begged him, in Heaven's name, to take him straight to Bellevue.

One night—Fyler had been missed from all his customary rounds that day—toward its close, there was a portentuous cry sounded

through the city. A flame, no larger than a man's hand, had been seen to flicker through the ground window of a wooden building, and presently the whole city was astir. At first two or three distracted men in leathern hats—they had been the first to discover it—ran up and down the adjacent streets, shouting at the top of their lungs, "Fire! fire!" Then a score or two of neighbors tumbled out of their beds, and taking it up, with the scantiest possible apparel for a public appearance, hurried about the block echoing the cry. Then other distracted people, bursting out at front doors, which went to after them with a crash, scrambling up from cellars or down from garrets where they lodged, tore through the streets. Presently a reinforcement of men in leathern hats appeared, rushing in wherever there was a lane, or square, or alley, and renewing the shout, "Fire! fire!" From various taverns and rooms about the city where dancing had been kept up to a late hour, certain young gentlemen, casting off their coats and leaving them in charge of their fair partners, by which it appeared, when the red shirts came to be disclosed that they were volunteer firemen in disguise, broke into the street, rushed distractedly about for a few minutes, until they had fixed their gripe upon an engine-rope, when, setting forward, they aimed with many others in a like plight, for the spot where the blaze was now mounting into a beacon-light.

The throng and tumult—which deepened every minute—centred about a row of wooden buildings standing in a back yard. The flame had a sure hold upon his prey, and coiled round striking it over and over again, in some new and vulnerable point with its tongues of fire. Every bell in the metropolis was now sounding, and new forces came hurrying into the yard; the engines clattered over the fence which had been thrown down, and began to take their order—the flame seemed to know it all, thrusting out a broad red face from the windows to welcome them, skipping with a nimble step up and down the stairs, and dancing about the roof, and in the very eaves for joy, to see so many friends about. The crowd swelled till it overflowed, not only that yard, but the next and the next, and all the neighboring streets.

The roofs, stoops, and windows, all about were filled with faces that glowed in the flame; and even on the housetops, far away, a single figure, sometimes more, might be descried standing out against the sky. The hoarse trumpets of the engineers sounded—the hose had been dropped in the cisterns—there was a thumping of engine-arms, a thin jet of muddy water rose against the flame, and the fire bounded up, livelier than ever. The supply had given out. The river was tried, and now they would have gone on triumphantly, had not a discovery been made to the effect that all the tall men on the engines were wasting their strength in hoisting up certain short gentle-

men and half-grown youths, who had fastened upon the engines, that they, the short gentlemen, might be in reach of the arms to do their part in bringing them down again. As soon as this was amended—by ejecting the short gentlemen and their associates, in a body, peremptorily from the yard, from returning to which they were only restrained by the officers' staves that began to ply about—they made head. The innates now came hurrying out—men, women, and children—bearing in their arms some little worthless trifle, and casting a frightened look back upon the burning row. There was one, a stout man, who carried in his arms, as tenderly as though it had been a child, a glass case shrouded in crape, which concealed, as might be guessed by such glimpses as the flame allowed, what seemed some child's toy or other. Then a lean man, with great staring eyes, came out with a run, and looked about him as though something had happened on a much grander scale than he had expected. As soon as this person had recovered himself a little, he borrowed from one of the companies a couple of fire-buckets, filling which constantly (although some considerable rents in the sides and bottoms prejudiced his labors not a little), he did what he could, running back and forth, toward extinguishing the fire. They had now all escaped from the row except one; and that one (the stout cobbler), instead of descending quietly like a Christian and good citizen, was seen tramping and dancing about the roof like a madman; throwing his hat into the air and catching it, with other demonstrations of the wildest joy. He and the fire seemed to understand each other well. They shouted to him to come down, to little purpose; they sent up huge jets of water, and these he shook from his ears like a great dog that liked the sport. Even a fireman, who had acquired a great name by his prowess in bringing old men and women out of dormer windows, down the long ladder, and who had been constantly climbing up and down the same and calling to any that might be lurking there, roasting privily, to come out—even he had gone to the very top round and besought the cobbler in vain. In his own good time, and when everybody thought there was no escape for him—a minute before the roof tumbled in—he came hand over hand down the lightning-rod, fixed against the gable, and reached the ground without a scratch. Once down, instead of employing his time in rescuing what he could, he devoted himself with extraordinary ardor to casting such articles of furniture, bedposts, chairs, or utensils, as he could lay hands on, into the flames; which, hurrying from point to point, he kept feeding as he would a hungry dog that had found great favor in his eyes for the very force of his appetite. So the cobbler kept the fire alive, and diminished more and more the stock of property whose distinctions it was his pleasure to loathe and help to level.

Whenever a rafter yielded, or a heavy timber fell in, a spare old figure, apparently availing himself of the new light that flamed up the sky and fell back reflected on the earth, was seen stealing about, bearing a basket on his arm, and in his hand a crooked stick, with which he drew from the heaps small, charred bits of wood and worthless cinders, and filled his basket.

At times he paused in his painstaking task, and going about to the circle nearest to the fire, he removed his hat, and, extending it to each in turn, begged piteously, both with look and voice, for alms—a penny only—a penny for a ruined man. Whenever they refused him, as they often did, not knowing him as the owner of the burning row, he would turn away and mutter in answer to questions which no one had addressed to him.

"You are right, sir," he would say, "the man's leg was out of joint, and General Washington thought a potato poultice just the thing." Then, going a few steps forward, he would pause at a heap, and begin counting cinders into his basket, as though it had been so much solid coin. Such as knew the broker heaved a sigh of compassion. Fyler Close was certainly distracted—gone mad, beyond all controversy. No wonder, they said to themselves; such a blow—meaning the burning of his buildings—was enough to unsettle any man's senses.

Ishmael, too, was on the ground, displaying a praiseworthy and astonishing activity in his endeavors to save what he could from the wreck, so as not to bankrupt the Phoenix company at once! Every other minute he was diving into the row, at the seeming peril of his neck, but taking good care to emerge at an early opportunity by means of an outlet on the other side, which he knew of, tarrying in the cellar only long enough to whistle such a tune as might lead the by-standers to scamper off, dropping whatever they had in their hands and protesting that there was a goblin in the vault. And when, at length, the flames reached the lightning-maker's loft, there were a dozen reports or more in succession, a broad sheet of all colors, blood-red and lightning-blue predominating, shot up into the sky—there was an involuntary clapping of the hands on the part of the juvenile portion of the crowd—Ishmael stood by, as ardent, but more secret, in his applause than any. At the moment of the illumination—which had been duly announced in advance by the explosion—the lightning-maker, who was still busy with his impracticable buckets, paused in his labors, and, looking up, a smile crossed his pallid face. His works had gone off to the satisfaction of his audience, and he was almost content, although his wife and children stood in the next yard with scarcely a rag to their backs.

This brilliant display seemed to have a peculiar effect upon Mr. Close; for he ran about while its brightness lasted with extraordinary

nimbleness, pointing it out to every one in the yard, and saying, in a wild way, "That's the man, his name is John Augustus Jones, and he owes me one and ninepence for tapping his heels."

How mad the poor broker was! The fire kept burning, although it began to yield—rolling up smoke and flames, which, mixing together, passed off in a turbid cloud toward the river. The night itself was dark and gusty; and the flames, at one time driven hither and thither by the wind, laid eager hold of houses, and sheds, and churches, so that had not men flitting about with buckets driven them back, the whole neighborhood would have been in a blaze.

But now it began to yield, and the broker moved about in its flickering light. He was suddenly accosted by a person of a bluff physiognomy, strengthened with huge black whiskers, who, taking him by the arm, would have drawn him quietly aside. Fyler turned, and, regarding him with a look of great steadfastness and severity, requested his arm to wither. The arm did not wither, but, on the contrary, seemed to acquire, by the very behest, a greater tenacity of gripe; which, when Fyler discovered it, he attributed to the circumstance of his having touched it with the wrong hand.

"This will do, old chap," said the other, transferring his hold to the collar and drawing the broker about with very little regard to the established usages of society; "we've had enough of this. These buildings were heavily insured, and you're wanted down town on business. Come, I know you well enough, Mr. Fyler Close."

"You lie, sir, allow me to say," rejoined the broker, turning upon his assailant. "I am Barabbas, the king of the Jews, and my mother's Mary Scott, the clear-starcher, in Republican alley. I am Barabbas, I tell you, and you owe me for the whiskers you've got on."

"It won't do, Uncle," said the officer, "it's a capital fetch, but your primin's wet; you must come." Whereupon, folding the broker's arm closely in his own, and putting on the air of his bosom friend, taking him out on a pleasure excursion against his will, he drew him along. Some of the by-standers, who had been moved by the affecting manner in which Fyler had conducted himself through the evening, murmured a little, but refrained from active interference. Ishmael—who had held himself aloof—and who, to tell the truth, had observed the eye of the black-whiskered man more than once fixed on his friend, during the fire, and who noticed that he went off and returned, whispering with another before he left (which observations there had been, however, no opportunity to make known to Fyler), Ishmael now stole close by his side and pressed his hand.

Fyler knew the hand, and felt its pressure. In that there was some hope yet.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE ROUND-RIMMERS' COMPLIMENTARY BALL.

FROM the point where the peninsula of brick puts forth upon Chatham square, running or walking along its base on the Bowery, a mile or better out of town, and shooting along its oblique side on Division street, gliding gradually off toward the East river at Scammel street, or thereabouts—lies the mighty province of East Bowery. And over all the region of East Bowery is spread—holding it in close subjection—the powerful clan of Round-rimmers; a fraternity of gentlemen, who, in round crape-bound hats, metal-mounted blue coats, tallow-smoothed locks, and with the terrible device of a pyramid, wrought of brassy buttons, standing square upon their waistcoats, carry terror and dismay wherever they move. It isn't the crape-bound hats—giving out to the public, as they do, that the gentlemen who wear them are dead to the great world of watchmen and indefatigables, preachers and practitioners of peace and amity. Nor is it their strait-skirted blue coats, nor their brazen pyramids, that make them a terror to all ages and both sexes. Nor is it their independent carriage in public, and the extreme freedom with which they sway their arms. The true secret of their power rather lies in the circumstance that they always rove in bands; that, like the wolf, when one only is seen on the prowl, the herd may be guessed to be close at hand, ready to rush in and bear their brother through whatever peril he may encounter—from the clandestine kissing of a woman to the tripping-up and desecration of the corporate person of the mayor. Now, it is well known that these classical gentry have haunts of their own, where no small-heeled boot or mustached face is permitted to intrude; that they drink at their own resorts; grow temperate and moral in churches or chapels of their own; and that they break-down or pigeon-wing, where a white kid glove would, at a single wave, raise an insurrection.

And yet the Round-rimmers condescend to join the common world in certain of their observances; they have committees among themselves, where small men swell into great, by dint of volubility and intrigue. They make presentations, after their fashion, to distinguished men; and give complimentary balls, where they get a fever to a boiling pitch. It was, in fact, with these very objects in view, that the mighty brotherhood of Round-rimmers resolved on irradiating the head of Mr. Ambrose De Grand Val with the splendors of a grand complimentary ball, for the accuracy with which he had chalked their floors and mixed their punches, and the skill with which he had guided them and their fair partners through the mazes of a winter's dances. Of course there was the calling of a meeting; the

passage of resolutions—very tender and affecting as they touched upon the relations which had existed between the parties, and very flattering when they came to mention Mr. De Grand Val; and the appointment of a committee to preside over the arrangements. The arrangements were made; the night had arrived.

The committee, on which were several resolute men, had determined on a bold stroke. They meant to have this known, through all coming time, as *the* ball—the grand complimentary ball, before which the lamps of all future balls should wax dim, and all future committees of arrangement stand abashed. It should be a double-headed ball—a ball with two great, overwhelming attractions. One of them would be Mr. De Grand Val, the distinguished beneficiary, whose head was already engraved on the ticket, with an entire wheat-sheaf in one corner, in lieu of the more regular accompaniment of a chaplet for his brow, and a pair of long-legged doves, billing each other, and going through a duet in the other. So far—good. In looking about for another, they determined, in the abstract, that it should be a politician—an eloquent, distinguished, and popular politician, of prepossessing manners and agreeable address. Puffer Hopkins, who had won such honor in the late contest—who was hand and glove with several of the leading members of the committee, was the very man; and Puffer was invited to be present, which he graciously acceded to, and requested to be in readiness by a certain hour, to be put in a hack by a branch of the general committee, who would wait upon him to the ball.

Puffer, who was not sorry to avail himself of so capital an opportunity to extend his fame among the members of a powerful body, was apparelled and ready to a minute, having approached as nearly as was prudent to the costume of his constituents—he dared not adopt the pyramid, nor the flat locks, exactly, but he laid aside his straps, and garnished his hat with a broad belt of black riband. With the aid of the committee, who called for him, he entered the carriage, two aiding from within by seizing his arms, and two from without by placing a hand against his person, and thrusting it gently forward with a respectful pressure. The supernumerary committee-man—four inside—mounted the box with the driver; the coach whirled away; and, at a rattling pace, they were soon at the mouth of the Bowery, or Vauxhall gardens—the royal pleasure-ground of the Round-rimmers—the extreme limit of their territory on the west—where the grand complimentary ball was to be given. Two large variegated lamps blazed in the front of the gate, to the admiration of one or two hundred observant boys; the blast of a trumpet, evidently blown by a short-winded gentleman, from the intermittent nature of its peals, burst forth; and Puffer, entering, was overwhelmed with the gorgeousness and splendor of the spectacle that

broke upon him. In the first place, the garden, to which he was a stranger, was filled with trees—which was a novelty in a New York public garden—some short and bushy, others tall and trim, but actual trees. Then there were a thousand eyes or better lurking and glaring out in every direction, in the shape of blue and yellow and red and white lamps, fixed among the trees and against the stalls. Then there was a fountain; and then, through two rows of poplars, commanding a noble perspective of two white chimneytops in the rear, there stretched a floor—the ballroom-floor itself. He had no further opportunity for observation, for the committee, hurrying him away lest he should be seen before the proper time for his presentation to the company had arrived, bore him to a small room aside, where he found a separate pitcher of lemonade and an honorary paper of sandwiches devoted to himself, partaking of which, and being allowed time to smooth his locks and dust his pumps, he was carried forth into the air again. This time he was borne by the committee, who stuck close to his person, into a private path, so dark and shady that a deed of blood might have been quietly done upon him; winding in and out among the shrubs whenever any of the company—the more tender-hearted of whom affected the place in couples—came in sight, until they reached the extremity of the garden opposite that at which they had entered. The chairman of the committee gave a low whistle—there was a burst of music from the orchestra, who swarmed in a box midway among the trees like so many robin-redbreasts, and Puffer found himself upon a platform, his hat in his hand, his hand upon his waistcoat where his heart lay, bowing to a large assemblage of both sexes, who stood gathered upon the floor waving handkerchiefs and shouting, shrieking, and hallooing, a whole menagerie of welcomes. An acute ear might have detected, in the pauses of this tumult, a sound arising in a remote quarter of the garden, resembling not a little the blows a stout-handed cooper deals upon his kegs, when he is anxious to fix or unfix their hoops; thither two ambitious members of the committee, who had been unable to agree which should have the honor of attending Mr. Hopkins upon the platform, had, by the advice of mutual friends, withdrawn, and in a stall, by the light of three or four blue and yellow lamps, were proceeding to settle the point according to the established custom and usages of Round-rimmers.

From his elevated position Puffer commanded a view of the entire spectacle as it moved forward. Upon the floor, arranged in sets of eight each, which had been momentarily disturbed by his reception, and which were now re-formed, were a great number of young gentlemen in fancy pantaloons, of corduroy, white jean, and nankin, close at the knee and flaunting at the ankle; collars rolled tight under the chin over parti-colored neckerchiefs of em-

phatic blue or red, the smooth locks cropped close behind, and the customary brass-mounted coats, ornamented with cauliflowers, or large monthly roses at the buttonholes, and at their sides an equal number of young ladies, some of whom were red-nosed and flat-breasted, and others of a rounded form and great beauty of feature, in dazzling calicoes, dangling earrings, that shone through the night like fireflies, kerchiefs of an equally emphatic hue spread upon their breast, and ringlets disposed upon their brow with a glossy smoothness that emulated their partners. The gentlemen stood with their arms a-kimbo on their hips; the ladies doing homage to their lieges with faces turned smilingly upon them. The band struck up, the couples dashed off, throwing out limbs with an unexampled vigor in every direction—the gentlemen thumping the floor with their heels at every descent—the ladies mounting into the air and whizzing about, till the dangling rings buzzed through the trees like fireflies on the wing. Sometimes a gentleman in the furor of his zeal, came spanking upon the floor; sometimes a lady, losing balance in the heat of her motion, dashed headlong into the ruffles of one of the stationary young gentlemen off duty, who were gathered in groups about the edges of the dance. Suddenly there was an abrupt pause in the orchestra, every instrument down to the triangle stood still, and the company, looking up in wonder of the cause, saw that the orchestra to a man was standing, and that every eye was fixed, with painful earnestness, upon the other end of the floor. The beneficiary—the illustrious De Grand Val—had come in sight. He was in the hands of the committee; and the committee were coming along as fast as the crowd that hung upon their progress would allow them. Every now and then, a face, smiling and black-whiskered, was just visible for a moment and disappeared again in the throng. Then a hand might be discovered touching the smiling face and flying off from it, as in a sort of playful or affectionate spasm. This by no means helped to abate the enthusiasm; the orchestra was excited beyond bounds. The trombone had climbed a tree, and was shaking down lamps and green caterpillars ever so fast, in a disordered state of mind brought on by over-excitement. With many pauses, by slow stages, they had reached the head of the floor, where certain gentlemen, with blue ribands at their buttonholes, who had restrained themselves with difficulty, rushed down the floor, and seizing Mr. De Grand Val, whose body was springing back and forth, in a series of remarkable congees at the rate of forty a minute, tore him away and bore him to the foot of the platform, from which Puffer and his committee hung, watching their proceedings with a wonderful intensity of interest. De Grand Val was at length got upon the stairs, so that he was just above the heads; and then when those immortal legs burst into full view, the ardor,

which had kept in some sort of limits, burst into demonstrations of affectionate admiration that were touching to behold. The young gentlemen clapped their hands, and made inward comparisons with their own—the young ladies sighed and threw up their pocket-handkerchiefs. Once upon the stage, a most agreeable and imposing interview passed between the master and Puffer Hopkins, in which each bore himself to the entire satisfaction of the company. Mr. De Grand Val advanced a step or two, a gentleman in a blue riband suddenly appeared from the other side, advanced a step or two and paused. Something was coming; for Mr. De Grand Val hung his head and produced his pocket-handkerchief.

There was a dead silence; every eye in the place—even the cross-eyed waiter's that always served the creams in one box and the spoons in the opposite—was fixed upon the gentleman in a blue riband. He had a small parcel in his left hand and his right was advanced.

"Respected sir," began the gentleman in the blue riband, securing the parcel with a fresh hold, "I beg, on behalf of my associates and self," here he looked hurriedly about to other gentlemen in blue ribands at his side, "to present to you the gift enclosed in the wrapper which I hold in my hand. The pair of satin smalls which I now present to you, are the medium through which we wish to convey to you our sense of the delicate and distinguished manner in which you have performed the arduous duties you have undertaken for our benefit and our advancement. We present them to you as they came from the hands of that ingenious artist, James Jones of 143 Cannon street, unaltered and unsullied. We give them to you as emblematical of the many hours we have passed together in similar and kindred garments, beguiling life of its tediousness and dissipating the midnight winter-strained. The smalls are three feet in length, have two feet six inches breadth of beam and front, and carry one person. Other causes than the mere desire of seeing you clothed, have led to the construction of the great work now before us; they have been built not only to warm your limbs, but also to gratify the eyes of your affectionate scholars and friends. The importance of having the seams made secure and the buttons well fastened, was awfully demonstrated in the case of Mr. Wail, whose pantaloons, being inadequately constructed, burst open, as you may recollect, the season before last, in the presence of one hundred and eighty scholars, in no less than five distinct rents. The late Mr. Larkin was also a sufferer in the same way; but not to quite the same extent. In presenting you these smalls I wish to call your attention to some of their peculiar and characteristic features. Examine them—they are not breeches, they are not trowers, they are not slops. They have neither open-bottoms nor straps; but what is most singular, they have

neither a hind pocket nor side pocket, not even a place to put a watch in. I desire now to express an individual wish. As boy and man I have witnessed the devotion and personal sacrifices with which you have floun about your ball-rooms, rending your linen for the pleasure and gratification of your fellow-citizens. But I have witnessed too, with sorrow, what individual mortification and discomfort you, with others, have brought upon yourself by sitting thoughtlessly down on dusty chairs and unclean benches. The wish which I ardently offer is, that while you employ these smalls in dancing to the delight of our whole community, they may be associated in your mind only with what is pure and agreeable, disdaining any familiarities with windsor soap and washing-tubs. In conclusion, I take the liberty on behalf of our company generally, in saying that we feel ourselves honored by the presence of Puffer Hopkins, Esq., our distinguished friend and fellow-citizen. We do not show him sky-rockets and bengola lights, but we show him that James Jones has been busy in the arts of peace with a view to promote the comfort of our beloved preceptor, Mr. De Grand Val. Accept these smalls."

The gentleman in the blue riband advanced a step or two again, Mr. De Grand Val likewise advanced a step or two. Mr. De Grand Val was in possession of the parcel. He cast his eye down upon the wrapper, then he turned enchantingly and looked about with a comprehensive smile which opened his whiskers and disclosed his teeth and embraced all parties present, on the platform and off, both sexes, and even an interloper who stood gazing from the remotest end of the floor. There was a dead silence again. Mr. De Grand Val was about to reply.

"Ladies and Gentlemen," said Mr. De Grand Val deeply moved, "I accept this token in the spirit in which it is given. I regard it, and shall always regard it, as an evidence of your devoted attachment, tried principles and prompt payments, as long as I live. Whenever I look at them, whenever I wear them, I shall call to mind the spirit with which you have availed yourself of my instructions, the promptitude with which you have cashed my quarterly bills. They and I shall be inseparable, provided, as I have an abiding conviction, they fit. They will serve—how happily!—to recall to me the purity of the young ladies whom I have instructed, the manliness of the young gentlemen." Here there began to be a movement of applause. "By saying this, however, ladies and gentlemen, I do not mean that I shall always wear these satin smalls. No, no. God forbid that I should ever be seen performing the ordinary duties of life in these precious garments, your affectionate gift. Distant be the time when it shall be said that Ambrose De Grand Val was known to have had on his smalls riding a trotting match on the avenue, or mixing slings at Fogfire hall, or

climbing a sloop's mast on the East river. I shall reserve them, ladies and gentlemen—and I think you have anticipated me in this statement—for more select and dignified occasions. I think I may venture to wear them at a wedding?"—"You may," from a large portion of the audience—"but not on a fishing excursion?"—"No, no, shrimps and salt-water is fatal!"—"On the shady side of the Bowery?"—"To be sure!"—"But not to church—that wouldn't do." And Mr. De Grand Val laughed aloud as much as to say, "That's a good one!" "But, ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid I shall be compelled to make an exception—a single exception—as to the rule I have laid down for myself in the use of these smalls. I have a friend, ladies and gentlemen, a dear friend, a former pupil of mine—known to some of you—who, in a moment of unrestrained hilarity, playfully thrust a caseknife, which he happened to have about him, a couple of inches or so into the body of a thick-headed watchman; this trifling circumstance has called the attention of the state toward him; the state wants him 'up the river, and when he's called for he asks, as a favor, that I will go up with him. I know how gratifying it will be to our friend to see me in these smalls, and now, ladies and gentlemen, as a parting favor, I ask to be permitted to use them on that occasion!" At this there was a universal response, "In course!"—"By all means!"—and so forth, to which Mr. De Grand Val bowed in his best manner, and ended by laying his hand upon his breast, and uttering in a heart-broken voice, "Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you!" There was scarcely a dry eye in the garden. At the moment when Mr. De Grand Val was discovered with the wrapper under his arm, descending the platform with the committee, twelve cotillions—spread along the floor—burst into a dance expressive of tumultuous joy. Puffer kept his station on the platform, surveying the dance, his thumbs thrust, politician-wise, in the arm-holes of his vest, and his eye ranging along from set to set—when suddenly it came upon an object which fixed it as firmly in his head as if it had been an eye of stone. A dark-eyed young lady, only three sets from the stage, of great personal attractions, stood facing a great sturdy-shouldered fellow who seemed to be her partner in the dance, (although Puffer would not believe it), and where the light of more than a dozen lamps fell upon her face. He could not be mistaken. It was—it must be the dark-eyed young lady he had met at Mr. Fishblatt's entertainment. He stepped from the platform and lounged down the floor in company with a member of the committee. He thought he would like to confirm his impressions by her voice; in that he could not err, for he recollected, now that his head swayed that way, there were tones in it that could not be counterfeit or delusive.

"Fine weather for young ducks," said the dark-eyed young lady.

"Not bad neither for heifers and bullocks," said the sturdy-shouldered young gentleman. "Speaking of bullocks, if Bill Winship don't keep inside his chalk I'll cut his plumb for him." And he glanced at a young gentleman of a brawny build, who was working his way with might and main, through a complicated figure.

"Bill!—Bill Winship, come over here!" cried the dark-eyed young lady across the floor, as soon as Mr. Winship had achieved his position again. "Joe Marsh's distributing knuckle soup to-night, and he wants you to take a sup."

"Never mind quite yet," cried the sturdy-shouldered young gentleman, Mr. Marsh himself; "only don't you throw your legs quite so much ox-fashion or knockin'-down time 'll come afore to-morrow daylight! That's all!"

The dark-eyed young lady and the sturdy-shouldered young gentleman laid their heads together and conferred in a dialect which was in a great measure unintelligible to Puffer Hopkins, but having reference, as he saw by their glances, to the young gentleman across the floor who kept dancing beyond his chalk in spite of the friendly warning of Mr. Marsh. As soon as he could address the young lady, without rashly invading the privacy of her interview with Mr. Joe Marsh, Puffer came forward and, begging her hand for the next dance, took the place of the sturdy-shouldered Marsh, who withdrew, tugging very fiercely at the ties of his neckcloth, evidently meditating summary death, either to himself or his brawny opposite. The dark-eyed young lady immediately entered upon conversation with Puffer; referred to the entertainment at Mr. Fishblatt's, not forgetting Alderman Crump nor Mr. Blinker; touched pleasantly upon their wanderings on the way to her residence; came down to the present ball, glanced at its striking points, and all in very chaste, appropriate, and elegant language, which startled Puffer not a little when contrasted with her discourse with Mr. Joseph Marsh. Who was the young lady? What was she? There was evidently a mystery about her. She had two tongues like the double-headed heifer at the show; and now that he looked more closely, she was dressed in a style quite as singular and composite. A part of her dress—her gown and shawl, folded over the breast, were in the very height of the Round-rimmer's fashion; but, then, about her neck there was a delicate necklace of pearl and her hair hung from her brow, in fair glossy curls that leaped like the young tendrils of the vine in the spring breeze, at every motion of the dance.

The ball went on with unabated spirit. Puffer Hopkins and his partner bounded forward, *chasséz*, *dos-a-dos'd*, and *balancé* with a vigor and accuracy that were the delight of the whole set.

"I *balancé* for you," said the dark-eyed young

lady, as soon as it was their turn to rest. "I *chasséz* and forward across for my father."

What could this mean? The mystery was deepening and the dark-eyed young lady brightened into clearer and fairer beauty every minute. He ventured to ask if her father was in the gardens. Oh, no; he was at home studying the gazetteer. There was no opportunity for further questions, for at that moment a figure encased in white came bounding up the floor—the dancers opening and forming a line on either side and clapping their hands with great earnestness as he came along. There seemed to be no point or pitch at which you could say, the excitement is at its height. De Grand Val had come upon the floor (having privily withdrawn for that very purpose) in his presentation satin smalls! How well they fitted him! What a figure! What motions!

De Grand Val begged them, if they loved him, to re-form at once—he couldn't bear to see them idle—and taking his place at the head of the first set, at the very top of the floor, he struck into the dance. Were there ever such leaps, such pirouettes, such graceful turnings of a partner, such pigeon-wings! Every eye was upon him, and when, in the enthusiasm of art he sprang into the air, tossing his skirts almost over his ears, there was visible on the waistband of his smalls, an inscription worked in with black silk, "Presented to Ambrose De Grand Val by his affectionate and admiring pupils"—there was another thrill, deeper, stronger, more like electricity than any yet! The excitement *was* now at its height. The orchestra was in a state of extraordinary fervor; the base-drum roared and rumbled out of all bounds; the violin snapped a string in its excessive agitation and hurry; the trombone and triangle were beside themselves and wouldn't keep in tune. The young ladies threw off their kerchiefs upon their arms—the gentlemen their coats upon the bushes and benches behind them, displaying red undershirts, and a great variety of hoists, embellished sometimes with a great black heart of leather in the middle, or with mystical creeping vines, breaking out all over in sheepskin blossoms. At intervals the company rushed down from the floor into the stalls at the sides of the garden, and falling upon various refreshments there set out, acquired so much vigor as to return to the stage in astonishing force of wind and limb. At the end of every third dance or so, the gentlemen, resigning all care of their partners, marched in a body to the bar at the other end of the garden, fronting the floor, where the bar-tenders, standing in a row in their sleeves, wrought constant miracles in the mixing of slings, punches, and cobbler's. And so they kept it up by the hour, beyond midnight, when some slight abatement in the spirit of the entertainment began to show itself. Every now and then a set fell off, one by one, until there were only a few stragglers about



the floor, kept together by almost superhuman exertions on the part of the gentlemen in the blue ribands. At last there was no one left but the gentlemen in blue ribands themselves, who wandered hither and thither, gathering up shawls, combs, and other stray articles abandoned by their owners.

The lights were out or smoking in their last remains, the waiters asleep upon the benches, and the great De Grand Val roamed about the paths and bowers of the garden, in his satin smalls, unattended and unobserved.

Puffer—to whom she had been courteously resigned by Mr. Joseph Marsh, who had attended her thither, and who went off in search of Mr. Bill Winship, the obnoxious dancer—took the dark-eyed young lady's arm in his, and had long ago set forth. He knew the way now, and it was a very different one—so it seemed to him, although it remained untouched—than when he travelled it before. The crossings were as broad, the roads as crooked, the squares as long; but how miserably short and narrow, how provokingly straight they seemed! It would have been a pleasure to him to have got into Doyer street and wandered about all night long. The door was reached before he had thought of it; an old woman came with a nimbleness, the very recollection of which took his breath away, and then, when the dark-eyed young lady entered in, how cruelly quick she was in closing it, with her ugly old face in her very hood, and hurrying her away.

### CHAPTER XXX.

#### MR. FISHBLATT'S NEWS-ROOM.

THROUGH all of Puffer's dreams that night there glided a graceful form; a pair of bright dark eyes glanced hither and thither like meteors, in all the motions of the dance; sometimes he was moving by its side, sometimes it parted from him, and when she left his hand, ah! how keen a pang shot through his heart! But gliding, and glancing, and full of cheerful images as were his dreams—whatever the mazes, whatever the turns, the pirouettes, the long country dances, the perspective always closed with the fair dancer's wearing a great green hood, and an old woman's head thrust inside, chattering and bobbing up and down. He had danced a score or more cotillons, reels, and flings—always with the same ending, when, at length, the old head seemed somehow to get fixed upon the young shoulders, the old body without a head galloped off, and the fair young form was left, chattering, double-headed, among the trees. This was too much for mortal patience to bear, and Puffer waked up. His first business, when he had fairly recovered himself, was to recall the dark-eyed young lady, in all her agreeable proportions, one by one, and replace her in his mind as she had been when he had

stretched himself to sleep. Lately as he had looked upon her, it was something of an effort; at one time he would fix her in a graceful attitude bending forward to move, her head slightly turned back toward him, but then the eyes, or the motion of the arm, or the smile that had played upon her lip, would escape him, and he would begin again. He went puzzling on in this way, even till he was dressed, though this did not prevent his appareling himself with great skill and judgment; drawing out, from the very bottom of a drawer, where it had been laid religiously aside for some select occasion, a bright blue neckcloth; arraying his new buff vest, which he had worn to the ball to marked advantage, and disposing of his handsome blue coat so that every wave and plait should tell. With the two tasks, his mind, it must be confessed, was sufficiently engaged; and when he had laid the last lock in its exact place upon his brow, and succeeded in recalling the dark-eyed young lady, in all her beauty, even down to the neat shoe-tie (that his dreams had not forgotten), it came into his head, as opportunely as one could wish, that he ought to go down to Mr. Fishblatt's at whose entertainment he had first met the dark-eyed young lady, and have a little gossip, just by way of relief! The day had, in this way, glided past dinner-time, and he thought the pleasing idleness of the morning had fairly purchased the afternoon as an extension of his holyday.

When he reached the house of Mr. Fishblatt, the door, in compliment to the pleasant weather, stood wide open; and Puffer, having established a sufficient friendship to warrant it, proceeded at once to the small supplemental room in the rear, where Mr. Halsey Fishblatt held his lair. Here he found Mr. Fishblatt in his arm-chair, holding, in a firm gripe, a wet sheet, which he regarded with a steady gaze. At his side there was a wooden stool, on the top of which lay a pile of damp newspapers. The reading of the wet sheet seemed to move Mr. Fishblatt greatly; his teeth were firmly fixed, and a thick sweat, as though it had steamed up from the newspaper, stood upon his brow. His attention was so entirely engrossed, that notwithstanding the unusual gloss and neatness of Puffer's apparel, he merely nodded to him as he came in, and, unfixing one of his arms, waived him to a seat. As soon as one side of the paper was finished—very little, apparently, to the satisfaction of Mr. Fishblatt—he gave the sheet a gentle shake, and, letting it fall into a current of air which set in from the entry, he turned a leaf, and folding it back, fixed himself upon the fresh side.

Glancing aside not once, but ranging up and down the solid columns as steadily as a plough-horse in a furrow, Mr. Fishblatt finished his acre or half acre of print.

"This is certainly an astonishing circumstance," he exclaimed, folding his paper, laying it upon his knee, and smiting it with his open palm, breathing now for the first time

freely; "an astonishing circumstance; on Monday, Busts of the Bladder made that pungent sally, and here it's Saturday, and no rejoinder from Flabby—what can this mean?"

At this moment a series of shouting boys streamed by in the street, whose voices, at their very top, were broken in passing through the long hall and up a flight of stairs. Mr. Fishblatt, however, whose ear was better practised, started up with a stern smile upon his face, and proceeding to the stairhead, called down. Shuffling feet were heard in answer, and tossing down a coin of small dimensions upon the entry-floor, merely said, "The Punccheon," and returned to his seat. In a second or two the frowzy-headed servant-girl, with her hair all abroad, appeared at the door, and presented to him a fresh sheet, which he fastened upon with great eagerness.

"As I thought," said Mr. Fishblatt, glancing rapidly down the columns. "An 'Extra Punccheon,' pretending to give late news from the Capitol, but containing, in reality, Flabby's long-expected reply. Capital! capital!" cried Mr. Fishblatt, as he hurried on; "Flabby's called Busts a drunken vagabond, in the Punccheon of Wednesday-week; Busts called Flabby a hoary reprobate, in Monday's Bladder, and now Flabby calls Busts a keg of Geneva bitters—says the bung's knocked out and the staves well coopered. Capital! this alludes to a thrashing in front of the Exchange, in which Busts had his eye blacked and a couple of ribs beaten in. Give us plenty of newspapers!" pursued Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, starting from his chair in the furor of his enthusiasm. "They make a people happy and intelligent and virtuous. The press, sir, the press is the palladium of liberty, and the more palladiums we have, the freer we are—of course. See here, sir, here's a big palladium, and here's a little palladium." At this he held forth to Puffer's gaze, first the mammoth sheet, and then the dwarf, and brandishing them in the air, proceeded: "This"—referring to the small sheet—"is edited by a couple of overgrown boys in Williamsburg, who do their own press-work—this by an undergrown man in Ann street, who does his thinking on the other side of the Atlantic. Never mind that—give us more. This people can never be free, Mr. Hopkins, thoroughly and entirely free, till every man in the country edits a newspaper of his own; till every man issues a sheet every morning, in which he's at liberty to speak of every other man as he chooses. The more we know each other, the better we'll like each other—so let us have all the private affairs, the business transactions, and domestic doings of every man in the United States, set forth in a small paper, in a good pungent style, and then we may begin to talk of the advancement of the human race. That's what I call the cheap diffusion of knowledge; a pennyworth of scandal on every man's breakfast-table, before he goes to business."

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Mr. Fishblatt having refreshed himself and his hearer with a tumbler each of lemonade, from the mantel (the probable remains of a last night's entertainment), was about to resume, when he was brought to a pause by the sudden entrance of the frowzy-haired servant-girl, who brought him a parcel from the postman who was distributing the southern and western mail.

"Ah! what have we here?" said Mr. Fishblatt, taking the parcel from her hand. "'The Nauvoo Bludgeon,' 'Potomac Trumpet,' 'Western Thundergust,' something rich in each, I will warrant. 'The corporal,' says the Nauvoo Bludgeon," pursued Mr. Fishblatt, reading from the newspapers, as he unfolded them; "'the corporal, we are glad to see, has resumed his editorial chair. There are few men in the press in the United States, that could be better spared than Tomkins; there is a raciness about his paragraphs, his humor is so delicate, his good taste so marked and prominent in all he writes. In a word, we couldn't spare Tompkins.'" Mr. Fishblatt unfolded another paper, remarking that the corporal edited the Potomac Trumpet—and here it was, a day's date later than the Bludgeon. "'Our friend Smith of the Bludgeon,'" continued Mr. Fishblatt, reciting from the Trumpet, "'has our thanks for the handsome manner in which he has alluded to our recovery from a critical sickness. Smith, we owe you one, and will pay you as soon as you are on your back—if not sooner. We were passing down Market lane, yesterday, when we heard a voice. 'Tompkins,' said the voice; 'Hollo!' We looked up—it was Grigsby—our old friend Grigsby, of Clambake point. He understood us, and we passed on. Do you take, Smith?"

Having despatched these, Mr. Fishblatt came to the Western Thundergust. The Thundergust was in a furious rage; they had been purloining his jokes, and he wouldn't tolerate it any longer.

"We have submitted long enough," said the Thundergust, "to the unbridled plunderings of the Nauvoo Bludgeon and the Potomac Trumpet. We mean to put a stop to it; and, to begin at the beginning, we would like to ask the man of the Bludgeon where he got that phrase, 'In a word, we couldn't spare Tompkins?' Does he recollect the Thundergust of Wednesday, the 15th of July? If he doesn't, we can refresh his memory. 'In a word,' said we, speaking of an article of furniture in our late office, 'we couldn't spare our cedar-wood desk.' There—we think we have pinned the Bludgeon man to the wall, and now we'll dispose of him of the Trumpet, by suggesting whether it wouldn't be better for him to buy a copy of the works of Mr. Joseph Miller at once, rather than be at the trouble of stealing his jokes from all the newspapers in the country? We only suggest it;—while we are on the point, we might as well say that the anecdote of Grigsby, in the last Trumpet was stolen as it stands, from the

first number of this paper, where the reader will find it printed at the head of the first column of the second page. Paste-boy, scratch off the 'Trumpet'—it'll be your turn next, Mr. Bludgeon; so you're on your good behavior!"

Just then, and before Mr. Fishblatt could dive deeper into the beauties of the press, an indifferently-dressed gentleman in a heated face and damp hair, rushed in, stumbling at the threshold in his haste, and pitching forward, but taking the precaution to knock his hat tight with one hand as he stumbled.

"Heavens and earth!" exclaimed the damp-haired stranger, as soon as he recovered himself, "it's passed!"

"It is?" echoed Mr. Fishblatt, in a hollow and sepulchral tone.

"It is, sir," responded the stranger, wildly.

"What! you don't say, sir," continued Mr. Fishblatt, gazing steadily at him, "that the bill for clearing the navigation of the upper Wabash has passed?"

The stranger did; and he had in his hat an accurate report of the debate. It had been brought in by special express for the Junk Bottle. An express-rider, by-the-by, had broken his neck in coming through New Jersey, and the messenger had pitched into the office of the Junk Bottle with such precipitation with his parcel, as to have struck the senior editor where he knocked all the wind out of him; so that they needn't look for any leader to-morrow. He would take off his hat and they would get at the particulars. The damp-haired stranger did so; set his hat upon the floor—planted one foot upon a chair-seat near by, and bending forward, so that the sweat dropped on the paper as he read, proceeded to furnish the following account, which was heralded in the Junk Bottle with the portrait of a small fat cherub, flying at the top of his speed, his cheeks distended, and a trumpet at his mouth, from which issued the word "Postscript!" in a loud, bold type. It was from the Washington correspondent of the Junk Bottle.

"I can hardly hold the quill in my hand with joy at the news I am about to communicate—news that will, I am satisfied, thrill the whole country from one end to the other. THE BILL FOR CLEARING THE NAVIGATION OF THE UPPER WABASH was passed last night between eleven and twelve o'clock, after a most animated and stormy debate, in which the emissaries of power put forth their utmost strength. Their subterfuges, their cavils, and cries of 'Order' were, however, of no avail. The bill had a clear majority of five, and the country is safe. Of the true-hearted men who distinguished themselves on the side of justice and patriotic principle, Peter Alfred Brown, of Massachusetts, was pre-eminently conspicuous. He was seen everywhere during the debate, animating, exhorting, encouraging—from his place in the house; sometimes, in the energy of his extraordinary powers, standing up in his chair, and sometimes addressing the house from his desk-top, where

he took his station at last, and maintained it for better than an hour, during which he delivered one of the most remarkable and wonderful speeches of the present epoch. There are few men, in any age or country, to be compared with Peter Alfred Brown. I subjoin a hasty outline of a few of the most striking passages in the debate.

"Mr. Buffum, of Kentucky, in opening the discussion, remarked that the country was in imminent danger, much more imminent than he was willing to confess. The people expected much and they got nothing. A crisis had arrived which must be met. He need not describe to them the present condition of the whole region around the upper Wabash. It was little better than a desert; trade, by the obstruction of navigation, had fallen off to nothing—the grass in the neighboring meadows was four feet high—vessels of transportation were sticking, absolutely sticking in the mud at the wharves, and the cartmen went about the streets whistling dirges and psalm-tunes.

"Mr. Woddlie, of South Carolina, who rose in reply to Mr. Buffum, would not answer for the consequences, if the bill before the house should become a law. His (Mr. W.'s) constituents were in a highly inflamed and excited state of mind on the subject of the proposed clearing. If the upper Wabash (they asked) was once made navigable, what would become of the Little Pedee? Why, it would sink to a third-rate stream, and in the place of the honorable gentleman's whistling cartmen, they would have a stagnant marsh, full of musical bullfrogs. He (Mr. W.) respected the constitution of the country, and so did his constituents; but, should this bill pass, he could not promise that a flag, with some terrible device, would not be seen flying, in twenty-four hours after the news, from the walls of Charleston.

"It was at this juncture, that Peter Alfred Brown, of Massachusetts, rose. Every eye was upon him; and, without faltering for a moment, he entered upon the subject. He showed clearly, in a masterly effort of better than two hours, that the constitution had manifestly contemplated the object in the proposed bill. He showed, so that the blindest and most jaundiced eye could not fail to see it, that the framers had provided for the very contingency that had now arisen. He would not occupy the time of the house in pointing out the express clause in the constitution covering the present case; but he proved, by an ingenious and elaborate train of reasoning, in something less than an hour, that the entire scope of that instrument went to such an effect. In a peroration, never surpassed in the house, he begged them to stand by the constitution. His arms trembled, as he held up to their view a printed copy which he held in his hand; and when he sat down, the universal conviction was that he could not be answered. Notwithstanding this feeling, he was immediately followed by Marc Anthony Daggers, the notorious member from Virginia,

who poured out upon the head of the illustrious Brown the vials of his wrath. There was no epithet of denunciation he did not heap upon the head of that distinguished man. 'Sir,' said Daggers, turning so as to face Mr. Brown, who sat complacent and unmoved, writing a letter at his desk, 'sir, you are a disgrace and a contumely to the American Congress; a pedlar of logic, and a wholesale dealer in falsehood and fable. Where you were born, sir, the land, in sympathy with you, breeds nothing but copperheads and toadstools; the soil is rocky as your bosom, sterile as your brain.' Here there were loud cries of order, but Daggers went on without heeding them in the least. Brown was a buffalo, ready to plunge his horns into the vitals of his country; he was a volcanic fire, a monster, a doting idiot, and a political mountebank.

"At nine o'clock in the evening, to which hour they had been kept listening to the tirade of Mr. Marc Anthony Daggers, Mr. Blathering, of Missouri, obtained the floor. His effort was in every way worthy of his matured powers and reputation. For fourteen years he (Mr. B.) had labored, single-handed and alone, to obtain justice for the citizens of Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. For fourteen years he had cried at the top of his lungs to the people of the United States, to render their right to the residents on the Wabash. The Wabash was still obstructed, and if he, like Curtius of old, could, by casting himself headlong in, reverse the spell and open the river, he was ready, at any moment, for the sacrifice. All he asked was an hour's notice, and an opportunity to say 'Farewell,' a last farewell, to his wife and children.

"The upper Wabash, Mr. Speaker, is a stream rising in the interior of Indiana, at about the latitude of 40°, &c. (Here he produced several maps, and quoted freely from two piles of books before him, which occupied about an hour and a half delightfully.) He closed with an appeal to the house, which surpassed anything ever heard before within its walls. I need only give you the concluding sentence, to show you the magnificent stamp of the whole.

"'If I were now standing upon the summit of the Chippewyan mountains, instead of the floor of this house, and were suddenly and unexpectedly seized with the icy pangs of death,—if I saw that my last hour had come, and that but one more breath was left me to draw, I would say with that last breath, so that I might be heard by every man in America, "Clear the Wabash! in Heaven's name clear its mighty bottom, and let its waters flow in a mercantile tide into the Ohio at Shawneetown, and into the Mississippi at Big swamp!"'

"The bill was engrossed at twenty minutes past eleven, and at twelve was sent to the senate for concurrence. There was an unexampled rush toward the stalls in the lobby and

the hotels on the Avenue, the moment the house was adjourned. This tended somewhat to allay the excitement. Thank God, the country is safe!"

"Curse that Junk Bottle!" cried Mr. Fishblatt, who had watched closely the reading of the Washington letter, "it's always bringing unpleasant news by express in advance of the mail. Our trade is ruined, sir. New York is a dead herring. All Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, will flow into the Wabash, the Wabash into the Ohio, the Ohio into the Mississippi, and the Mississippi makes a mouth at New Orleans. Where does that bring us? Not an Indiana turkey, nor a Kentucky ham, nor an Illinois egg, reaches the New York market henceforth for ever. In ten years you may expect to see this mighty metropolis a heap of ruins, and auctioneers going about knocking down the rubbish in lots to suit purchasers. What do they mean by passing such bills?" Mr. Fishblatt turned to Puffer; the damp-haired stranger, released from the steadfastness of his gaze, hastily resumed his hat—to the crown of which he restored his paper—and escaped to dispense his news in some other quarter of the town. Puffer, who had stood aside, pondering in his own way, on the subject of the upper Wabash, and, turning it about in his mind till he got it in a light that pleased him, looked at Mr. Fishblatt, but made no answer. But when Mr. Fishblatt added, "I'll go and see my friend, Mr. Samuel Sammis, and have this explained—will you join me, Puffer?" he started from his reverie and said it was the very best thing they could do. In a moment he threw down the newspaper, with which his fingers had been toying, held his hat in his hand, and was ready to issue forth on the instant. Now this alacrity on the part of Puffer—must we confess it?—was owing to an unavoidable accident: Mr. Samuel Sammis was the father of the dark-eyed young lady!

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### PUFFER HOPKINS IMPROVES AN ACQUAINTANCE.

A HALF-HOUR'S walk, in which Mr. Fishblatt harangued and expatiated, without limit, upon the iniquity of the bill for clearing the upper Wabash, brought them to the Great-kiln road, abutting on the Hudson, in Greenwich. And there, with a flaming red front, and a couple of apothecary's bottles staring from the first floor like two great blood-shot eyes, stood by itself the domicile of Mr. Samuel Sammis. Beyond, standing upon the river, and just visible across the angle of the house, arose a pair of hay-scales, with an inscription to the effect that Samuel Sammis was weigh-master and president of the same.

They were led to an upper story, for Mr. Sam

mis, like his friend Fishblatt, possessed the second floor—and, being ushered in, they came upon a party of old and young ladies, scattered about the apartment, in the very zenith and ecstasy of a full-blown litter of work-baskets, sewing-silk, and small-talk. The first object that fixed the attention of Puffer as they entered, was the dark-eyed young lady herself, busy fashioning portentous capitals, in white thread, upon a long red banner or bunting; and, at her ear, that everlasting old woman, whispering away, apparently, at the rate of a page a minute at least. There were other young ladies, each diligent with her scissors and needle, clipping, binding, patching. None seemed to be engaged in the literary department but the dark-eyed young lady; and not one, in Puffer's eye, was half as fair as she! There was one small and gentle, with auburn hair and lucid, blue eyes; another round and plump; another quite stately, with a wild, flashing look. There seemed to be a mould in his heart, and no other image would fit it but that one.

The dark-eyed young lady smiled a welcome to Puffer—turned to the old lady at her side, and whispering the words, "My aunt," as an introduction, invited him to a seat. Mr. Fishblatt, who was quite at home, was already in a chair.

"You are quite a stranger, Mr. Fishblatt," said the aunt, who was a little, prim old woman, dressed with exemplary neatness, and with a pair of dancing eyes. "You haven't been to see us since last election. What's kept you away—rheumatics?—no; perhaps it's been the winds that has blown down the city for the last month and better. You was afraid of getting a mouthful if you walked up this way. Wasn't that it? Ah! ah!" And the little old woman broke into a clear, joyous laugh which rung through the room and was echoed by the whole company of stitchers and sewers.

"Oh, no; nothing of that sort, I promise you, upon my honor," answered Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, gravely. "My whole mind, soul, heart, and body, have been engrossed with public affairs—horribly engrossed; so many exciting, and important, and weighty questions. One's no sooner well disposed of than another pops up. I only despatched the other day the question about the aqueduct, and, curse it, here's another water-question. I am borne down with anxiety and excessive thinking. Where's Sammy?"

To this question the old lady made answer that Samuel was at the scales; that he was very busy at this season; that she would call him in if Mr. Fishblatt would like to see him; and jumping up, in a minute more, would have put her head forth toward the river and summoned him; but on Mr. Fishblatt's entreaty she refrained, and he went out to seek him for himself.

Finding the field clear for conversation, Puffer addressed himself to the dark-eyed young

lady to the effect that she seemed to be a little in public life as well as Mr. Fishblatt, judging by the use to which she was putting the bunting on which she was at work.

"Oh, I only do as I am bid!" answered the dark-eyed young lady, "I'd as leave write one thing in here as another; my thread and needle are neutral, I assure you."

"How can you say so, Fanny!" exclaimed the aunt, smiling upon her, "she is one of the most arrant little politicians in the city, Mr. Hopkins; she keeps this whole ward in a constant ferment with her political tea-drinkings, and dances, and complimentary balls. You know something of her there, I guess; and now she's corrupting the alphabet itself."

"Aunt, I detest politics, and you know I do!" answered the young lady; "I'd rather, any day, walk down the sunny side of Hudson-street, than carry the state for our party!"

"You see she has a party—ah! ah! Now, Fanny, I shall expose some of your tricks. What do you think, Mr. Hopkins? This young lady, here, is so much of a demagogue, that, though her own tastes run in favor of broad laces and net-work gloves, she tramps, three times a week, the whole breadth of the city, and spends the morning in running up and down the stores in Division street—you've seen them, the little square shops with a back entry and a glass door, and a green vine dangling against the fence, and a young lady with twisted ringlets sitting between the two?—there she goes, and, with the aid of the two-and-forty milliners of that street, gets up dresses and costumes to catch the cartmen's daughters and the young mechanics! Now don't deny it, Fanny!"

During this narrative, Fanny glanced stealthily at Puffer, and blushed as deep a red as the silk she was at work upon. Before Puffer could enter upon a vindication of the young lady, which he fully meditated, the little old lady sprang up from her chair, ran into the corner of the room where a green shrub of some kind or other was vegetating in a blue tub, and called Puffer after her.

"Here's something great for you to look at, Mr. Hopkins; what a stem! did you ever see such a stem to a seven months' tree? What leaves! The lemons are every bit as big as plums—they'll be twice as large this time a year!" There was no limit to the eloquent praises poured out upon this domestic lemon; which was steadily exhibited to all visitors. This was Fanny's too—she had brought it up from a sprig. Then the old aunt—who seemed to have taken a sudden fancy to Puffer—caused a sampler to be unhooked from the wall, carried it to the light and expatiated upon it at equal length. Then she bustled to the door and whistled in a short-legged yellow dog, who stumped about the room, looking up in every body's face in the most comical fashion. He proved to be the property of Miss Fanny too; and his birth, parentage, history, and past ex-

plots (especially the incident of his drinking gin out of a bottle, in his infancy) were dwelt upon with edifying particularity. By the time the short-legged dog had finished the circuit of the company, a savor of supper began to creep through the key-hole of an adjacent folding door, and the aunt, breaking off her discourse abruptly, hoisted the window and shouted to Mr. Samuel Sammis that tea was ready. Having delivered this summons she closed the window; but presently hoisted it again to say that he had better come at once. Mr. Sammis failing to appear as soon as she desired, she raised it a third time to suggest that he had forgotten they had short-cake! The appeal was not in vain—Mr. Sammis's soul was touched at last, and he came in with Mr. Fishblatt.

Mr. Samuel Sammis was a foxy-looking little gentleman, in drab pants and a weather-washed blue coat, his hair was thin, his linen questionable, and when he came forward to greet Puffer, his face was a cobweb of smiles.

"I'm very happy to see you, sir," he said; "I knew you well by reputation, although I hadn't had the honor to be personally acquainted. It's always a pleasure to become acquainted with gentlemen of tried patriotism, Mr. Fishblatt?"

Mr. Fishblatt assented to the postulate, and—the folding-door being cast open—they marched in to supper. The opening of the folding-door disclosed a table spread with a liberal variety of dishes, and steaming with a cloud of tea-smoke that hung aloft. The chairs were placed, and the company were about to take seats at random, when Mr. Sammis begged them to pause.

"This table," said Mr. Sammy Sammis, evolving a little piece of pleasantries which he had elaborated in secret, with great care; "This table," said he, "is the empire State, with the various products of its soil. The chairs, of which you see there are eight, represent the eight senate districts or divisions. Aunt," addressing the old lady, "will you be good enough to sit for Dutchess and Orange—here, opposite the butter, for which Goshen, you know, is famous. Mr. Fishblatt, I'll send you up the river as far as wheat-growing Albany—there, that's it, abreast the short-cake. Mr. Hopkins, you're the member for New York, and must take your place at the bottom of the table and catch what you can from the river-counties as it comes down. Will you take charge of the salt-springs of Salina—I mean the salt-cellar," pointing two of the young ladies to chairs at the corners of the board; "and you," motioning the third to a seat in the centre, "Miss Erie, famous for your fruits—have the region of the peaches and preserves. I'll take the Oneida sheep-farms under my care," settling into a chair opposite a plate of cold mutton. "And for you, Miss Fanny, who are always babbling and making a noise, there's the tea-board for you—

the district of Trenton falls; you may pour the tea, but don't put *too* much water in it. You may begin as soon as you please."

They were all in their places; the dishes were passed rapidly from hand to hand; the tea poured, and they were fairly launched upon the meal. The weight of responsibility heaped upon them by Mr. Sammis did not seem to have impaired their natural powers a jot; but each one—young ladies and all—fell to as though they were in reality so many great public characters, each eating for a county.

After a half-hour's sturdy devotion to the products of the Empire state—as represented by the table—a pause sprung up, and Mr. Sammis availed himself of it for a little professional talk.

"Fanny, my dear," said Mr. Sammis, "how far have you got in your lettering of the banner?"

"The whole inscription," she answered. "Bottomites—Uncompromising friendship to the clearing of the Wabash." That was it."

"How *could* you make such a mistake?" exclaimed Mr. Sammis, in a rapture of surprise. "It was 'hostility,' not 'friendship.'"

"I'm sure you told me 'friendship,' father," retorted the young lady, "and to use the longest letters I could for the word."

"It was wrong, my dear," answered Mr. Sammis, calmly; "absence of mind—you'll alter it after tea, if you please."

The Bottomites had cried aloud in favor of the clearing as long as they thought it wouldn't pass; now that it had unexpectedly passed, they changed their cry. The relettering of the banner, was the result of an elaborate conference of Messrs. Fishblatt and Sammis, at the hay-scales.

"You think it all-important," said Mr. Sammis, addressing Puffer, after a pause, during which the business of the table had been diligently prosecuted; "you think it all-important to carry our next state-election?"

"Certainly!" responded Puffer.

"We must come down to Cayuga bridge," proceeded Mr. Sammis, "with four thousand, or we are done for in the next presidential campaign. The river counties are all right, I am told; Dutchess gives us five hundred, and Albany county is safe for at least three hundred and seventy-five."

"How is the Fourth ward of the capital?" asked Puffer, having in mind a political commonplace which he was quite sure Mr. Sammy Sammis would quote upon him.

"We must have it!" averred Mr. Sammis, "as goes the Fourth ward so goes Albany, and as goes the Fourth ward so goes the state, you know."

"To be sure!" echoed Puffer, "and we must make what we can out of the upper Wabash, at the first election that's held."

"By all means," said Mr. Fishblatt, with enthusiasm, "we must rouse the popular mind with strong appeals; we must show them the

enormity of the measure; point to the results, if the bill is allowed to pass into effect, to this city and state.

"Yes—and call upon them in the name of the lamented Decatur, to save the country from ruin!" added Mr. Sammis. "Decatur was a man of tried patriotism, I think?"

It was not easy to keep Puffer's mind to the subject; his eyes wandered constantly to the quarter where a certain young lady was seated; so that he was soon dropped out of the discourse, leaving Messrs. Sammis and Fishblatt to keep it up in their own way. Puffer's glances were not entirely unnoticed or unrewarded. Miss Fanny, too, had, somehow or other, grown pensive and uncommunicative, with a marvellous coincidence as to time and circumstance. When they had returned to the sewing-room, she exhibited to Puffer another flag, on which she had wrought the words, "For Congress," with a blank underneath for the name of the candidate.

"I wish I were allowed to fill it up," she said, looking at Puffer.

Puffer felt his heart beat quick, but did not venture to ask whose name it would bear. They seemed to understand each other better from that moment.

"My aunt was right," she continued, after a pause, speaking now without reserve. "I put a restraint upon my feelings to please my father; you understand now what I said at the ball. For my own part, and on my own account, I would rather lead a quiet life, aside from the bustle and face-making of politics. Have you ever had such a feeling in your busy life?"

"Many and many a time!" answered Puffer, calling to mind his poor neighbor, and the gentle quietude of his little chamber. "The life that glides away, like the stream that clings to its bed, I sometimes think may be happier than if it had foamed and brawled, and was broken in pieces in the clamor of a waterfall."

"And yet, I don't deny," continued Miss Fanny Sammis, "that I would like to have my carriage, with one sleek horse, and ride through Broadway once a week. I would not care about it oftener."

"Come, Miss Fanny, we must have some music!" cried Mr. Sammy Sammis, stepping out upon the floor, leading out one of the young ladies by the hand. "We have rested long enough—John, take a partner," to one of a swarm of young clerks that had come in after tea. "Mr. Fishblatt—aunt. Aunt—Mr. Fishblatt. Start up, William," to another of the young clerks—and to the last of them. "Mr. Jones, there's another young lady left—lead her out!"

Puffer had walked with Miss Fanny into the other room, where, in a recess behind the door, stood an old red piano. Miss Fanny ascended the stool, and Mr. Sammis cried out to his partners in the dance, "Now, recollect, it's the northern and western districts"—his head was still running on the political divisions of

the state. "It's northern and western against eastern and southern. The first couple that breaks down is in a minority, and incapable of taking partners for the next three dances. Strike up, Miss Fanny!—the Governor's march, if you please."

Miss Fanny, with Puffer at her side, struck the first few notes with a bold hand, as Mr. Sammis desired—but presently, as in spite of herself, a gentler air crept upon the keys, and, instead of a cotillon, she was playing a pathetic ditty.

"Louder and livelier!" shouted Mr. Sammis. "We want the Governor's march—four thousand strong!"

She essayed the tune; but the notes came again softened from her fingers, and seemed sighing back to the words that Puffer breathed gently in her ear.

With constant remonstrances on the part of Mr. Sammy Sammis, who was dancing for the whole northern tier of counties (the six war-dancing tribes included), and constant relapses on the part of Miss Fanny, the evening wore away.

At a late hour, Mr. Fishblatt, who, being a slow and solid dancer, had, to the surprise of all parties, carried the day, called for his hat; had Mr. Sammis aside in a whispered conversation, with occasional glances at Puffer, for a quarter of an hour; and, gallantly kissing the old aunt, summoned Puffer, and left.

Miss Fanny thought the travel of the stairway so perilous, as to bring a light even to the very front door; what passed there, between the dark-eyed young lady and the young politician, while Mr. Halsey Fishblatt stood in the street calling to him, remains a profound mystery. The spectacle, could he have looked upon it as an observer, would have doubtless seemed to Puffer infinitely more agreeable than that of the old aunt with her wrinkled visage inside of the dark-eyed young lady's hood. Marching arm-in-arm with Mr. Fishblatt, it is well known that Puffer put several pointed and searching questions to that gentleman, the answers to which were to the effect that Mr. Sammy Sammis was an incessant letter-writer to all parts of the state; a wire-puller and waker-up of counties and villages. That Miss Fanny was his only child; the old lady, his aunt, and Fanny's grandaunt—and being an unincumbered woman, with a round sum out at interest, Fanny was her favorite. After procuring which results, Puffer fell silent; and although Mr. Fishblatt addressed him in several most elaborate and animated harangues, he kept on musing, till they parted for the night.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE DEATH OF FOB.

It was all a cheat. The lustre in his eyes was false and treacherous as the glittering



whirlpool. The bloom upon his cheek was of the hue of the rose with the canker at its heart. Fob was dying. Martha had procured a little lodging directly opposite his chamber, and there she stayed when driven from his bedside by the considerate poor neighbors, who saw how her strength was wasted in efforts to preserve his. Even on such nights as she was not allowed to be a watcher in his chamber, she would hover about the door and through the hall—a gentle spirit—eager to catch the slightest cry of pain, and taking keen note if he but turned in his couch. Spring had gone: summer had come, and was ebbing fast; and, as its gentle breath died murmuring by the window of the little tailor, his pulses faltered more and more. At first he had been able to rise at times, and, going to his dormer—that precious window of all the Fork—had cheered himself with the sight of the sun at its rising—the slow-lapsing motions of the vessels as they glided down the river. Now that he was stretched all day long upon his couch, he made Martha—a service she was skilful to perform—stand at the window, and report to him, day by day, all that passed. The little street-sights, the crowds that gathered about the blind flute-player, the color of the horses and carriages that went by, the shape of the country-wagons that clattered into town, with guesses whence they came. But, most of all, he made her dwell upon the aspect of the country beyond the river. From her look-out she had followed the farmers through all their harvesting, from the first glance of the sickle among the grain to the garnering in the old red-roofed barns. She had told him—no more faithful chronicler than Martha—the color the fields had put on in all their changes, from green to brown, and back again to green; and how the woods grew bright, and ruffled and swelled with their palmy leaves; and then, when the yellow crept among them—but this she did not dwell on as the other, for Fob's heart fell when he heard that summer, the sweet, calm, gentle summer, was leaving the country. She had watched his fancy, and served it even in bringing him cider to drink, pressed from the old orchards in Westchester, where his youth, and hers too, for that, had climbed and frolicked. One day, he called to her to bring all his country treasures, his plants, his birds'-egg chain, his asparagus, and the fair addition she had made herself, and lay them on his bed. Martha came and sat down at his head. As his look passed from one to the other, tears gathered in his eyes and fell, like the summer rain, upon the pillow. His heart was full, and he began to babble of old times. He spoke of his youth, and asked Martha if she remembered how he used to come riding into the country, seated gravely on the coach-seat, high in the air, making a show of helping the driver with his horses? She did, of course she did; and how she, with her mother, now dead and gone, used to run and help him down. Then, there was

the visit to the garden, to see her robin that she had been feeding sleek and plump all the latter spring and early summer, against his coming. Then the blackberrying, and the grape-hunting, and the bird-nesting.

So summer after summer had passed; his father—the cousin of Martha's father—had, to the surprise of all the country round, come, by the will of their whimsical grandfather, into ownership of the homestead, which Martha's, as the expectant and favored heir, had occupied before. Then, fortune turning once again (a little law and a little doubtful practice helping her to turn), Martha's father had reinstated himself. Fob—his father had died of vexation and a broken heart, it was said—young and penniless, was pushed forth upon the world—was driven upon the unpropitious craft he had lately followed. Martha begged him, when he came to this, to pass it by—though her father had been her cruel jailer for years—to pass it by, as he loved her. How dark and unnatural the little tailor's features grew as he came upon these recollections. He felt that his countenance was changed, and turned to the wall that Martha might not learn how keen was his sense of the wrong her father—her unkind, her unpaternal father—had done him. He had done her, too, a cruel wrong—but she showed, by no change of look or color, any remembrance of it whatever. When this cloud had passed, and he could speak again, Fob dwelt upon the old haunts he had visited while she was in her dark dungeon at home, how she had been with him in all.

"In the lane, the meadow, the orchard," said Fob, "I lingered, striving to tread in the very tracks we had made together when the world went right with us. But it was all by stealth—at early morning or by the dull dusk; and, in the indistinct light, how often, Martha, did you seem to me to be gliding about, pale and breathless, but still loving—paler than even now. As it was—cautious and secret as I could be in my watch, the laborers or boys of the farm, crossing the paths on their way home at night or back at morning, sometimes came upon me, and started aside as though I had been a spirit of evil."

"I knew that it must be so," answered Martha, "for these were days (it was when report of yourself, the strange wanderer, had reached my father's ear) when they said my illness was deepening upon me—I was moved to an inner chamber, gloomier than the other, the curtains drawn close, the shutters sealed, and secretly nailed, too—for I heard the dull sound of the hammer—and light was shut from me as if it had been a wicked thing."

"Was that the result?" cried Fob, with a piteous look. "What a fool I was, to bring such a hardship upon you."

"I do not say it was a hardship!" said Martha, "I loved the darkness they thrust upon me, deep and deadly as it was; it was full of voices and bright eyes, like your own, telling

me of your love and faithful constancy. They said the darkness made me more cheerful—and they were right.”

“And what followed to you,” continued Fob, “when they seized me as I was stealing along under the garden-wall?”

Fob stopped at once; the countenance of Martha was whitening with a look of sorrowful entreaty, and her eyes filling with tears. He understood it at a glance—she wished to have her father spared, though he had never thought of sparing her—and Fob turned at once to talk of other things.

“Do you remember the old orchard burying-ground,” he asked, “and the uses to which we were wont to put it?”

“To be sure I do,” answered Martha, recovering her composure. “The old burying-ground, full of fruit-trees, with the little schoolhouse pushed in at one side, as if it meant to be a good neighbor. Toddling infants, dear Fob, we strayed there to gather blossoms and flowers, brighter than we could find anywhere else. As we grew older and more learned, you know, we loved to read our letters there upon the tombstones; and, older still, and wiser, were we not?—we began to pluck the red and yellow apples, the earliest ripened of the neighborhood.”

“And then,” said Fob, taking up the theme as Martha paused, “when our hearts ripened, and our cheeks flushed like the fruit above us, we used to sit in the summer noon under the broad shade, leaning upon a grave, it might be; and while the country round, for a wide circuit, was steeped in a listening stillness, the little burying-ground—swarming with bees and crickets, and melodious locusts—was filled with a gentle murmur, which seemed like the undersong of the spirits that slept beneath its turf.”

Martha bent above Fob, as he spoke, hanging in his words.

“And when,” said Fob, rising in his couch in enthusiasm, “the little brook between the schoolhouse and the graves, swelled by its tributaries from the woods, babbled above them all—the gentle hum died away toward nightfall, and the children came tumbling out of school, you know, they used to cross it, and letting their feet rest a moment on the graveyard’s edge, they escaped into the road and scampered to their homes, leaving a sound of cheerful young voices far behind. There, where little feet tread every day, so that they may say ‘Fob lies here!’—lay me there!”

He had spoken beyond his strength; and these words were no sooner uttered than he fell back upon his couch. Martha seized his pale hand passionately—as though she could so hold him back from the world to which he was hastening—and, bending above him, begged him to speak again. Presently his eyes opened, and he dwelt upon her face with a bewildered gaze. Was he among angels—this at his bedside the first he was to know? There

was not a word spoken, but their eyes were busy interchanging their lustrous light, a calm, bright, spell-bound gaze—was this the talk of the spiritual world?

At this moment the door opened; a young gentleman of an ashen aspect, sandy hair, and a look of strenuous cunning about the eye, came in, and behind him, treading lightly, and with a mournful look, Puffer Hopkins.

The young gentleman bore under his arm a great bundle of papers, tied in a red string, which he was at the pains to carry about, to notify the public that he was a lawyer in practice—a good, brisk, chopping practice, as they might infer from the size of the bundle. While Puffer looked sorrowfully upon Martha and Fob, the young gentleman busied himself in slashing the feathers of a quill which he had brought with him, and in peering about the apartment for an inkstand.

“He’s going fast,” said the young gentleman, calling in his glances from their unproductive search, and fixing them upon the quill which he was trimming. “Didn’t he gasp, then, or was that a cat sneezing on the roof?”

Puffer avoided his question, and asked whether it was absolutely necessary to disturb him now; he seemed to be in great pain.

“To be sure it is,” answered the young gentleman, poising his papers in his two hands, to show their weight. “You couldn’t have a better. Testimony *in extremis* is the finest in the world. Mr. Mouldy says he must have it; and what Mouldy says is law!”

“Mr. Mouldy thinks he ought to be identified as the person that had the deed in his possession, and who destroyed it. I so understood him.”

“You understood him right, then,” said the young gentleman, turning calmly on his heel as soon as he had made this answer, and breaking into a subdued whistling.

“You attended to getting the old man here, I believe?” suggested Puffer.

“I asked Mr. Mouldy about that before I left the office. One of the boys has gone for him; he will be here in a minute.” With which answer the young gentleman stepped across the floor, and unfastening the blackbird from where it hung upon the beam, took it to the window, and began to make it hop about in its cage by pricking it under the feathers with his quill. Puffer, standing aside, dwelt upon Fob and his pale companion, holding his breath lest he should disturb them. Quick feet, clattering up, were heard upon the stairs, and Hobbleshank came hurrying in. At first he started in surprise when he saw Martha, but recovering himself speedily, he stepped about the chamber, shaking hands with the young gentleman, then with Puffer, and, last of all, accosting Martha.

“This, then, is your friend,” said he, smiling upon her. She glanced at Fob, with a look that went to the old man’s heart, and he

was answered. Fob lifted his eyes, and regarded Hobbleshank with curious interest. Was this another risen from the dead? Changed as he was by years, the furrows on his countenance ploughed in, his hair grizzled and gray-sprinkled by time—he could not mistake him. It was the old wanderer of the Scarsdale road. The melancholy midnight—the raging sea—the rent deed—all came up before him. A chair was placed for Hobbleshank, and he took his station by the bedside, where Fob could look upon his countenance with the light streaming upon it. The young gentleman had drawn up the curtain; led Martha and Puffer aside, to get rid of their shadows upon the bed; and himself retreated behind a little screen at the head of the bed, from which bower there issued, from time to time, a scratching sound.

"You have had troubles, sir," said Fob, bearing in mind what he had seen on the memorable night.

"A few," answered Hobbleshank, rubbing his hands. "A few, but they are all clearing away. Have you had none?"

"Yours are older than mine," resumed Fob. "They have followed you to an old age; but they are leaving me while I am still a young man." Martha knew what he meant, and turned and wept. "You have been eighteen years a sufferer, at least."

"Let me see," said Hobbleshank, taking the square breastpin from his bosom and referring to its back, which was graven and lettered. "Quite as long as that; but I'll soon be young again. Fortune is my friend, and all is coming right. An old parchment or so—a clew or two more—and I shall find my child, and have a home to bring him to. In a day or two all will be right."

They all smiled, the clerk even laughed aloud in his bower, at the earnest hopefulness of the old man.

"How a deed, all torn in fragments and parcels, can come back," said Fob, smiling with the others, "it would be hard to guess. Won't you admit that?"

"It seems so, at first," answered Hobbleshank; "but a good Providence, I am sure—I feel it whispering in my ear this very minute—is putting it together. It will be ready when I want it."

"And that is now!" said Fob, reaching backward under his pillow. "And here it is!"

Hobbleshank held in his hand the parchment he had scattered on the seashore a lifetime ago. He would not believe it, but, springing from his chair, ran to the window, where he would have read it, but his hands trembled and made it waver, all blurred and confused before him. He called Puffer to his aid, who, going over it slowly, line by line, made known its contents. When Puffer came to the passage relating to his child, he made him pause and read it over twice, looking up into the reader's face with a look of indescribable satisfaction. It was his old deed, and no other.

"Where did this come from—where was it found—by whom?" asked Hobbleshank, looking toward the little tailor.

"Eighteen years ago," said Fob, as soon as Hobbleshank could be brought to take his seat again by the bedside, "there was an old sorrow-stricken man, travelling by the shore of the sound. Eighteen years ago this deed was rent by his hands in a hundred fragments."

"Where—where is he now?" asked Hobbleshank, from whose mind all recollection of the occurrence—so fast had troubled thoughts and times huddled upon him—had entirely faded. "Where is this man?"

"You are the man; older, but happier, it would seem—and I am the other, your fellow-wanderer that night. Live and grow in happiness, while I pass beyond the sphere of earthly pain or pleasure. You are the man!"

His strength was utterly gone, and ere Martha could reach his side, he lay, his arms stretched out, his head fixed and rigid on the pillow. They all thought he was dead. In a little while—Martha ministering what she could to bring him back—a faint color came into his cheek, his eyes opened again upon the light; but now their expression was changed. They wandered from face to face with a hopeless and bewildered glance. His mind was gone astray. He babbled incoherently of the green fields—the old coach—the homestead. Sometimes he repeated the name of Martha—then he had another upon his tongue, but, shuddering, it died away before it was uttered.

Whenever his hands, straying about the covering of his bed, fell upon any one of his country treasures, he came back and talked of early times. News had spread throughout the Fork that Fob was dying, and they thronged up, and holding the little children in their hands—Fob had always been a friend of theirs—they stood at the door, looking on with sorrowful respect.

At this moment the young gentleman came from behind the screen, pressed his quill upon his coat-skirt, and thrust the new paper he had been framing among the others in the bundle. He then scrutinized the deed curiously for a minute, and handing it to Hobbleshank, advised him to roll it up and put it in his pocket; and, clapping his bundle of papers under his arm, he walked off.

As the sun waned away in the sky, the brightness faded from Fob's look, and he spoke only at long intervals; murmuring what he would say, so that no one but Martha, whose face was always close to his, could gather what he uttered.

A little while after sunset—the room was growing dark in all its corners—he began to talk aloud again. He called, over and over again, for an old serving-man of the homestead, whose name he mentioned, to come to his side; fixed his look on the poor blackbird, whose cage had been restored to its place upon the beam, and clasped, tighter and tighter, Martha's hand in his. With the gentle motion

of the wind upon a field of autumn grain, his spirit stole away; and at an hour past sunset Fob was dead!

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

#### PUFFER IS NOMINATED TO THE AMERICAN CONGRESS.

IT would be a great wrong to Puffer—colored as were all his acts by some hue of his trade—to suppose that the death of his poor neighbor had not touched him nearly. The genial spirit of the Fork was gone; the kindly sunshine which had flowed from that little dormer through all its chambers, was darkened. Puffer felt that a dear friend was dead. He would have helped, with other ready hands, to lay him in a quiet grave; but when he would have offered aid, the body—which Martha had watched alone, refusing, even angrily, all aid or company—was gone, no one could tell whither. It had been borne forth secretly at dusk; and one of the children who had been out at play upon the meadows, brought news that he had seen it upon the shoulders of two men, in the suburbs, gliding toward the country, with Martha watching and following it alone.

With the kindest remembrance of his poor friend, Puffer was not permitted long to rest; the pressure from without forced upon him other thoughts. His fortunes were on the advance, and he would set apart a quiet hour, at some better day, to think of the little tailor and his virtues.

An unlucky accident at the Capitol required that an election should be held for a single member of Congress. The late city representative—the lamented Slocum, he was entitled in the newspapers—had lost his invaluable life under a surfeit of Potomac oysters and long speeches, and his place was now to be supplied. To carry on the contest with spirit, and any chance of success, it was necessary that an issue should be raised; it didn't matter greatly what or which side either espoused. The upper Wabash presented itself and was adopted. The excitement rose to an unexampled pitch. The orators of Puffer's party, the Bottomites, having mastered their cue, went all lengths in denouncing it as an infraction of the rights of citizens—an invasion of the constitution—an act of the most high-handed despotism; and foremost and conspicuous among these was Puffer himself. He was the very embodiment of the anti-upper-Wabash feeling; and he was nominated to the vacancy. Was there ever a more extraordinary character known—in history, ancient or modern, sacred or profane—than Puffer Hopkins, now that he was nominated to Congress on the eve of a decisive contest? The newspapers, morning, noon, and night, teemed with his praises. Little,

obscure, out-of-the-way circumstances in his history, were dragged forth and made the occasion of the most flattering comment and allusion.

Some one or other had discovered his habit of visiting the city cellars in quest of oysters; he was immediately styled the "Patriot of the Pie-houses." He had caught, one afternoon, in company with a crew of political cronies, a small carful of striped-bass and Lafayette fish, in the East river, and was declared the "Hero of Kipp's bay." He had saved an omnibus-driver from being beaten to death by a crowd, for riding over the legs of a boy—and he was the "Champion of Conveyance." His very head was taken off his shoulders and put in plaster; delegations of tradesmen were constantly waiting upon him, or writing complimentary letters, humbly soliciting the honor of crowning him with a new hat, or arraying him in a clean dickey. The Bottomites—being staunch friends of free-trade—insisted on clapping him in a coat of Thibet wool, fancy pants of French jean, boots of Poughkeepsie leather, and a palm-leaf hat, so that he should be a representative of the unrestricted fabrics of the four quarters of the earth.

On the other side, the illustrious Insurance President, Mr. Blinker, being a bitter foe to fire, and quite as close a friend to the opposite element, and having recovered his popularity in the interval since his defeat, by insuring two poor cartmen's sheds at his own risk, and adopting the son of a disabled sailor as one of the secretaries of the company (though the young gentleman was as innocent of pot-hooks and ledgers as a Kamschatkan), Mr. Blinker was nominated by the advocates of the Upper Wabash.

To carry out his principles, Mr. Blinker—having discovered that a second-hand senatorial coat and a sable and satin neckcloth were not always triumphant—assumed a round-crowned hat, and a homespun coat and breeches of the plainest texture; in which array he went about diligently, drinking incessant glasses of gratuitous water at the grocers', in furtherance of his Upper Wabash principles.

He also proceeded to an active canvass of the churches, by attending a new one every Sunday, and rattling in a donation of half a dollar at least, at each.

Puffer, not to be outdone by Mr. John Blinker, canvassed the markets in opposition to the churches; and having drilled a small company of young vagabonds, he made a circuit of the market-places on Saturday nights with these—their rags flying to the wind, and an expression of doleful gratitude in their faces—running at his heels; Puffer keeping in the advance, and from time to time ordering a cutlet, or steak, or tender-loin, to be cast in. This was so well enacted, that he had not made a tour of the markets more than twice before he had the butchers in tears, and swearing by liver-and-lights, their own tender-loins, and all that they

hold holiest, that Puffer was an angel, with a heart as big as an ox.

Everything gave token of a close and furious contest. Appeals, fresh and frequent, were made to every possible interest and every possible voter. It was shown conclusively, in more than one harangue, and a hundred leaders, that every trade and denomination in business—laity, clergy, law, medicine, merchandise—were particularly and vitally affected in the questions presented at the coming election. And, as the time drew nearer, a forcible address was made to that one voter in particular, by whose deportment, as is well known, the fate of every contest is determined. There was not a device for creating or securing electors that was not brought to bear; and the one party or the other was constantly startled into unheard-of exertions, by learning that its opposite was strengthening itself with fresh recruits from quarters that could have never been dreamed of.

There was one that toiled in Puffer's behalf more like a spirit than a man; a little shrunken figure, that was everywhere, for days before the canvass; a universal presence, breathing in every ear the name of Puffer. There was not a tap-room that he did not haunt; no obscure alley into which he did not penetrate, and make its reeking atmosphere vocal with his praises. Wherever a group of talkers or citizens were gathered, the little old man glided in and dropped a word that might bear fruit at the ballot-box. At nightfall he would mix with crowds of shipwrights' prentices and laborers, and kindle their rugged hearts with the thought of the young candidate.

He stopped not with grown men and voters, but seizing moments when he could, he whispered the name in children's ears, that, being borne to parents by gentle lips, it might be mixed with kindly recollections, and so be made triumphant.

It was given out that the Blinkerites had established or discovered, in some under-ground tenements that never saw light of day, a great warren of voters. When the toilsome old man learned of this burrow that was to be sprung against his favorite, he looked about for an equal mine, whence voters might be dug in scores, at a moment's notice, should occasion demand. With this in view, one afternoon, he entered Water street, at Peck slip, like a skilful miner, as though a great shaft had been sunk just there.

And a strange climate it was that he was entering; one where the reek and soil are so thick and fertile, that they seem to breed endless flights of great white overcoats, and red-breasted shirts, and flying blue trowsers, that swarm in the air, and fix, like so many bats, against the house-sides.

Tropical, too, for there's not a gaudy color, green, or red, or orange-yellow, that the sun, shining through the smoky atmosphere, does not bring out upon the house-fronts; and for inhabitants of the region, there are countless

broad-backed gentlemen, who, plucking from some one of the neighboring depositories a cloth roundabout, a black tarpaulin, and white slops, sit in the doorways launching their cigars upon the street, or gather within.

Hobbleshank, a resident of the inland quarter of the city, certainly came upon these, with his frock and eye-glass, as a traveller and landsman from far in the interior; and when he first made his appearance in their thoroughfare, looking hard about with his single eye, it could not be cause of surprise that they wondered aloud as he passed, where the little old lubber had come from, and that more than one of them invited him to a drink of sheep's milk, or a collop of a young zebra, that one avowed they were chasing in the back yard for supper, at that moment.

But when, as he got accustomed to the place, he accosted them with a gentle voice, said a complimentary word for their sign-board, with its full-length sailor's lass—Hope upon her anchor, or sturdy Strength, standing square upon his pins—they began at once to have a fancy for the old man.

He passed from house to house, making friends in each. Sometimes he made his way into the bar-room, where, seated against the wall, on benches all around the sanded floor, with dusty bamboo rods, alligator skins, outlandish eggs, and sea-weeds plucked among the Caribbees or the Pacific islands, or some far-off shore, he would linger by the hour, listening with all the wondering patience of a child, to their ocean-talk. And when they were through, he would draw a homely similitude between their story—the perils their ship had crossed—with the good ship of state; and then tell them of a young friend of his, who was on trial before the ship's crew for a master's place. Before he left, in nine cases of ten, they gave their hands for Puffer, sometimes even rising and confirming it with a cheer that shook the house, and brought their messmates thronging in from the neighborhood, when the story would be recited to them by a dozen voices, and new recruits to Puffer's side enrolled.

Then, again, he would be told of an old sick sailor in an upper chamber—tied there by racking pains in his joints, answering, they would say, each wrench to the trials his old ship's timbers were passing through on the voyage she was now out upon—and mounting up, he would find him busy in his painful leisure, building a seventy-six, razed to the size of a cock-boat, for the landlord's mantle. Gaining upon him by degrees, Hobbleshank would sit at his side; and by-and-by, when he saw it would be kindly taken, gathering up a thread of twine or two, and helping to form a length of cable or rigging. By the time a dozen ropes were fashioned, he would have a promise from the old sea-dog that he would show his teeth at the polls when roll-call came.

There were some, too, engaged in boisterous mirth and jollity in back parlors, just behind

the bar; where a plump little fellow, in his blue roundabout, duck trowsers supported by the hips, and tarpaulin hat, with a flying riband that touched the floor and shortened him in appearance by a foot, broke down in a horn-pipe to the sound of an ancient fiddle, that broke down quite as fast as he did. In the enthusiasm that held him, Hobbleshank even joined in, and with some comic motions and strange contortions of the visage, carried the day so well that he won the back parlor's heart at once; and they promised him whatever he asked.

The little old man—true to the interest he had first shown—bent himself with such hearty good will to his task, that when, after many days' labor, he left Water street, at its other extremity, there was not a ripe old salt that was not gathered, nor a tall young sailor that was not harvested, for the cause. And so he pursued the task he had set to himself without faltering, without a moment's pause. For days before the contest came on, he was out at sunrise, moving about wherever a vote could be found; nursing and maturing it for the polling day, as a gardener would a tender plant; watching and tending many in out-of-the-way places, and by a skilful discourse, a chance word, an apt story, ripening it against the time when it was to be gathered.

Late at night, when others, who might have been expected to be stirring and making interest for themselves, slumbered, Hobbleshank, taking his rounds through the city with the watchmen, with more than the pains of an industrious clear-starcher, smoothed the placards on the fences; jumping up where they were beyond his height, as was often the case, and brushing them down, both ways, with outspread hands, so that they should read plain and free to the simplest passer-by. Was there ever one that toiled so, with the faith and heart of an angel, in the dusty road that time-servers use to travel!

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### HE DINES WITH THE MAGISTRATES.

IN the very midst of these silent labors of Hobbleshank, Puffer was at his desk, meditating a letter from an imaginary constituent to himself, and had got as far as, "To the Honorable Puffer Hopkins, M. C.," when there filed into his chamber three gentlemen, who, looking about for a moment and discovering that there were not chairs enough to hold them all, drew themselves up in a line and stood before him. Puffer, quite equal to the emergency, rose from his desk and faced his platoon of visitors. One of them, the head of the line, was a tall gentleman, in a sear-ash complexion and a rough frock-coat, in the pockets of which he deposited his hands; the centre, a stout,

rosy personage, whose head was propped up by a shirt-collar, of alabaster purity and stiffness, under his ears; and the other, a little black-haired man, with a large mouth, and arms of an extraordinary length. Mr. Hopkins inquired, delicately, into the object of their mission.

"We have come, sir," said the long-armed gentleman, reaching forth convulsively to the chair from which Puffer had risen, drawing it before him and fastening both hands firmly on its top; "we have come, sir, to express our respect for your past public career—our admiration of the unflinching fortitude with which you have adhered to objects"—

"Yes, sir—to objects," interposed the stout gentleman, cutting in as if he thought the long-armed man was getting more than his share; "yes, sir, to objects of a profoundly patriotic character; and, sir, we feel the honor of being delegated to wait upon you for the purpose of testifying the interest with which your course has been watched, not only, sir," he pursued, thrusting his left hand into his coat and spreading it upon a ruffled bosom; "not only, sir, by the friends of good order and correct principles—of advanced age—but also"—

"By the rising generation;" continued the tall gentleman, groping earnestly in the bottom of his frock-coat pockets, and drawing himself up to his full height. "You will not be surprised, therefore, sir, to learn that we are authorized to ask you, in the name of the common council of New York, to partake of a dinner with the magistrates of this city"—

"At the almshouse," said the long-armed gentleman, "this afternoon"—

"At five o'clock," said the stout speaker.

The three orators had put Puffer in possession of their errand, and he had a shrewd guess—as one of them was an alderman, and the others assistants—that this was one of those cases where a committee had been unable to agree upon a mouthpiece, and had compromised the difficulty by distributing the speech, as fairly as they could, in three parts.

The invitation was not to be slighted; and, having appointed to call for him at four, they filed out of the apartment in the same order in which they had entered. At four o'clock they reappeared, coming up in a body to wait upon him to the carriage, as if determined that no one should enjoy a crumb of honor more than the other. The vehicle into which the party mounted was an old corporation hack, and the horses, having travelled this road any time for ten years past, jogged along at an easy gait, knowing well enough that an alderman does not like to be disturbed in his agreeable reveries on the way to dinner. Leaving the streets, in less than half an hour they were out upon the avenue, where, as they glided comfortably along, they were constantly passed by gentlemen in rough coats, just like the tall assistants, who, bending over in light wagons, gave

the rein to long-legged, dock-tailed horses, and emulated the speed of other gentlemen with long-legged nags and rough coats. Sometimes one passed, perched in the air upon an invisible axle resting between two huge wheels, and who held himself suspended, it seemed, by a constant miracle. Not more than fifty of these gentry had whirled by, tearing up the avenue, and losing themselves in clouds of dust in the distance, when the three aldermen, looking unanimously out of the coach-window, exclaimed in a breath, "Here we are!"

Puffer looked out, too. A great gate opened silently from within; their carriage glided through; and, rolling gently down a broad way, they found themselves at the East river's brink, shut out by thick walls from all the city world. The buildings that stood behind them, and with which they were fellow-prisoners in this silent realm, were dark and gray.

The air and place were tranquil as midnight, and in strange contrast with the incessant motions and shoutings of the busy road they had left. The old almshouse, resting on the very water's edge, sat as silent as a stone; the water, calm and smooth, seemed to stretch away before its dark old front, to furnish a glass in which it might view itself and learn how it bore its age. The sun poured a full afternoon into the yard, and, sitting in its very centre, his face against the river, in the porch of the building as they entered, was an old beggar, who, with a countenance of marble firmness and locks white as the unhatched flax, seemed to be the image and god of the stillness that reigned about.

The moment they ascended a few steps and opened a door, a peal of laughter burst, like a cloud upon the silence, in their very faces, and passing through the hall, they were in a room where the chief guests were assembled. In the centre of the group stood Mr. Gallipot, the mayor, in an entire new outfit, so ill-adjusted, and disproportioned to his person, that there could not be a doubt but that it had seen Chatham street in its infancy, and while it was growing into the dress of an adult mayor.

"How are you, Hopkins?" cried his honor, from the midst of his guests, "Let's have you this way! Open the ring, Jenkins—stand back there, Tom Smith;" and, falling away as they were bidden, Mr. Gallipot came forward, and seized Puffer cordially by the hand. Messrs. Jenkins and Tom Smith—two noted bottle-holders of the mayor's—offered him as hearty a welcome, with others, the chief politicians of the city, who were there; and a short fellow, in a poorhouse gray roundabout and poorhouse cut hair, coming in and giving the summons, they marched across the hall to dinner. The table was spread in a large square room, with delicious windows upon the river, and under the auspices of a stout gentleman, who hung in a great frame upon the wall, and gave warrant—having been a noted haunter of

the room in his lifetime—of the good cheer that there abounded.

There was no quarrel for precedence; the mayor, with Puffer at his right hand, seized the head of the table; the others fell into chairs, whose locality they seemed to have pitched upon long before, and, seated at once, they filled them so happily, one might have sworn they were born, each man, for the particular wind-sor or rush-bottom he occupied. The three stickling committee-men, even, had adjusted matters, the stout one sitting at the foot of the table, in its centre, and each of the other two at his wings. And when, speedily and in solemn order, the dishes began to appear, as one after the other came in at the head of the apartment, a whole galaxy of eyes rolled that way, and fixed upon them with a lingering fondness that would have moved the soul of a pagan.

And now the table was full, Puffer was not a little surprised—but quite as well pleased—to see his old friend Hobbleshank, handsomely laid between a couple of aldermen, with whom he seemed to have a good understanding, at the other end.

Imperfect and obscure is the experience of any one who has not eaten a poorhouse dinner. The highest happiness allotted to man—at least in his imperfect and sinful state of existence as a New-Yorker—it would seem, is to dine at the old almshouse. Jupiter restored to earth, would make his first call there; and there Bacchus, if allowed, would undoubtedly bespeak lodgings for the rest of his immortality.

For two weeks, in anticipation of the present banquet, the garden had been hoed, and harrowed, and forced; the neighboring river had been anxiously searched for certain delicate fish that were known to lurk in the rocks, holding themselves in reserve for an alderman, for an equal fortnight; and two sharp-eyed paupers had been off on an excursion up the Sound, in watch for duck and pigeon. Nothing could be more perfect, more delicious, and grateful, than the dinner spread upon the board; and nothing more artful and ingenious than the arrangement of the diners. The cooks and servants of the establishment moved by a sure instinct—most of the guests were habitual frequenters of the place—seasoned each dish to a turn, and each gentleman was now found seated directly opposite whatever a well-practised appetite most earnestly coveted. For better than an hour, a silence profound as death reigned through the hall. The waiters, in their poor-house livery, and licking their chaps, moved about on tiptoe; it would have cost them their standing as paupers to have broken the charm by a word. Dishes were brought in and removed, in a mysterious stealth, which lent a piquancy to the proceeding; and the very feeders themselves, absorbed in the sacred rites of the place, only ventured now and then to look off, for a minute, and smile to each other, and then started afresh.



This at an end, wine was brought in, a basket at a time, and being placed near his honor the mayor, he proceeded to uncork, but so unskillfully, it seems, that the corks took a blank range down the table, and, what was singular, they always fell into a line that caused them to strike, dead-point, the scone of a little quidnunc, who was said to be a butt of the mayor's. Then the bottles were distributed down the table, one to each man; which, being planted upon the board, stood there, a sort of tipsy ninepin, to be bowled down by the evening's mirth. When it was known that every glass was loaded to the brim, Mr. Gallipot sprang to his feet; every eye was fixed upon him with intense anxiety; and when he announced, "Our Country," they started in like manner to their feet, and fell upon their wine with such patriotic ardor, that no one could have in the least suspected that country or its institutions of being in any way the bottom and main supply of the present festivities. But when Mr. Gallipot followed this with "The Public Charities," a faint surmise might have dawned on the beholder's mind, that the enthusiasm was real, and that they meant all they did when they drank a bumper to these excellent corporate contrivances for such as are a hungered and athirst. And when, further on, his honor, allowing scarce a breath between, followed this up with, "Our distinguished guest and next member—Puffer Hopkins"—a fearful tempest swept the table from end to end; and one or two of the lighter quidnuncs were even lifted from their feet, and landing upon the table, shook the glasses and bottles till they danced with them with joy.

They felt grateful to Puffer for furnishing them so plausible an opportunity to investigate the economy of so excellent a city charity. Puffer was bound, of course, to respond to these admirable sentiments.

Really (this was the train of his observations) he never felt so oppressed in his life, in rising to speak. He was surrounded by kind and generous friends. He was their creature—they had taken him, a poor friendless youth, and made him what he was. Little had he dreamed, when making his first humble effort at Fogfire hall, of attaining an honor like this. If any one had told him the time would arrive when he should partake of canvass-back and champagne with his honor, the mayor, and the common council of New York, at the almshouse, he would have laughed at their folly. Canvass-back and champagne!—they might as well have talked to him of a steam-carriage to Chimborazo, or a balloon-ride to the first fixed star!

While Puffer was speaking, two or three of the inmates of the place were drawn to the door, and as he advanced in his speech, and looked off in that direction, by way of illustration or gesture, he observed that two of them had fixed their attention keenly upon him himself. One of them was a woman, of a stout

person, into whose face some color was creeping, through easy living and good fare, and the other a man, thin and sorrowful of look.

By the time he was done speaking, one of the poorhouse attendants had touched Hobbleshank upon the shoulder, and he now helped to make the group that gathered in the doorway.

When Hobbleshank and the woman met, it was, as their looks told, as those who have been parted for years—between whom some mighty secret is kept, and who have some great trouble in common. They talked earnestly together—the woman and the forlorn-looking pauper asserting something over and over again, it seemed, to which the old man would not yield, nor would he, altogether, withhold belief.

The diners were, meanwhile, fairly embarked; the stream of mirth was full; as it flowed up and down the board it sometimes attained a rapid head, carrying all before it in a general glee; or paused in little eddies and islets of drinkers, where it tarried and circled round and round within itself. There was one, a roaring whirlpool of jockeys from the avenue, who, with loud jokes and broad gusts of anecdote, kept up a constant pother where they sat. Then, farther on, there was a more quiet fry of ex-sheriffs, fine, rosy fellows—hanging and jumping of the rope are your healthiest exercises, it would seem; and then, in a stormier latitude, a shoal of aldermen, who kept up in their drink windy discussions without end. Among these, Puffer, as the jollity grew apace, was called down from his station near Mr. Gallipot, and it brought him within earshot of the group in the passage, who had watched him so strangely in his speech. They were still there, their heads close together, Hobbleshank's central, and busiest of all; and they still turned, from time to time, in their talk, and regarded Puffer with the same strange gaze. Whatever Puffer, with an ear sharpened by a curiosity he could not control, caught, was so straggling and disjointed, that it conveyed to his mind no distinct impression of their purpose. Their conference seemed, at length, at an end.

"I think as you do," he heard Hobbleshank whispering to the others, looking from the woman to the stranger, and then toward himself; "I thought so from the first; but I have been too often mistaken, I could not bear to be wrong again—it would kill me, Hetty; let us be cautious."

He muttered something in a broken and earnest tone—Puffer could see his lips grow pale and quiver as he spoke—and, leaving them, he hurried up the room and took the place at the table among the friends he had left.

There was no pause in the mirth of the magistrates and their guests; fresh baskets were broached every minute, a tipsy song roared out, and the adults there present attached

themselves to the long-necked flasks as if they had been brought there to be nursed on claret and champagne at the city charge. It was a relief to Puffer to hear what passed among the nurslings in their probation. Obliquely from him up the table, an arm's-length or two, there were a couple whose nursing seemed to try the constitution to an alarming pitch; and instead of being benefited, in any degree, by the dark spirit with whom they held so many close and earnest conferences, they always got back from the interview less robust in person and demeanor than ever.

"You know very well, Bill, that I o'rt to have that—place if any—chap has it," said one of them, a fine, large, sturdy-looking fellow, for a nursling, speaking slowly, out of respect to the understanding of his friend. "D—n it, Bill, dep'ty street-inspector—it's chalk for cheese—for one what's done—what—what—what"

His chin knocked upon his breast, and he kept asking himself, for five minutes or more, what it was.

"I'm the man that's got up twelve public meetings in the course of an humble life," said the other, at the top of his voice, and, looking around to call the attention of the company; "carried banners in five processions; pall-bearer to the late devoted Alderman Smith; you know me, Mr. Gallipot? Did you ever know a more ardent friend of his country than William Scraggs?—Who'll sign this 'ere roll, for Billy Scraggs?" And Mr. Scraggs produced, from his breast-pocket, a soiled scroll, which he unfurled across the table, and holding an end in his hand, he tumbled into the same slumber that had already engulfed his rival.

After an interval of half an hour they wakened, one getting the advantage of the other by not more than a minute, and renewed the dispute for the inspectorship; and after a brief and slightly confused statement of their claims, they lapsed back again into their dreams. There was no abatement in the spirit of the almshouse dinner. Even till midnight, speeches were made by aldermen and laymen and ex-sheriffs. Healths—sometimes of individuals, sometimes a broadside of the table against broadside—were drained, and Puffer, finding that a sadness had crept upon him, out of all harmony with their mirth, quietly withdrew, leaving his three committee-men on their feet together, and at an advanced stage of champagne, delivering speeches against each other; and his honor, the mayor, with his bottle-holders, squeezing lemons vehemently, at each side of him, brewing a drink for which he was famous.

In the open air, he found the doorway and high steps thronged with paupers, who had kept themselves from bed that they might listen to the uproar and jollification of their masters. "It was such precious fun," one of them said, "to see the corporation feeding its corpo-

ration, and getting high on taxes and brown bread." Puffer thought he had escaped unnoticed, but, as he entered the carriage, he found Hobbleshank at his side, asking to bear him company.

"To be sure," answered Puffer, "I would rather ride back with one like you than the three I came up with."

The old man smiled, but was silent, and this silence he maintained till they were half down the city. And when he began to speak, Puffer observed that his discourse was not of that in which either had an interest, but of remote and indifferent things, like one unwilling to speak of that which is nearest his heart, and who trifles in this way lest he betray himself.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE TRIAL OF MR. FYLER CLOSE.

Two months from the burning of Close's row, a large-nosed man, with brandy-colored cheeks, was busy, at early morning, locking the hall gates, when a small old man shambled up, and, holding on the outside, accosted him.

"Does the trial come on to day?" he asked.

"To be sure it does," answered the other, looking up, "didn't you know that? A man with a augur-hole for an eye might see that. Look at them wagons over there," pointing with a key through the bars, into Chatham street. "When you see 'em taking in pies at that rate in them shops, there's a capital offence coming on up stairs. Them shop-keepers is growing blessed rich on murders and hommicides—the Oyer and Terminer demand for pies sells 'em out twice a day while the court sits."

"How did he sleep last night?" asked the old man. He did not mention him by name, but the other knew that he meant the prisoner.

"Oh, beautiful, sir—very beautiful, sir!" answered the large-nosed gate-fastener. "We ha'n't had a lovelier prisoner sin' Johnson's day."

An inexpressible spasm convulsed the countenance of the questioner, which, being busy at the lock, the officer did not observe.

"No dreams," resumed the old man, holding hard upon the bars. "Wasn't he troubled a little in his sleep, sir?"

He watched the answer with a breathless look.

"Not a bit of it; not as much as 'ud stir a eye-lash. I was in the passage by his cell the better part of the night, and his breath comed and went like a infant's."

The old man's features fell; he had evidently expected a different report. The gates were by this time all fastened close and sure—the gate-fastener hurried away, clattering his keys—and, going round where an opening was left for passers in and out, the old man went in.

Climbing the winding stairs, he proceeded along the upper passage, and took his station by the court-room door, where he hoped the prisoner would pass. For a long time he stood there alone, starting at every sound that broke through the hall. By-and-by they began to come in, one by one, and cluster about the door; and by ten o'clock the passages were all filled. Presently, black-topped staves were seen bobbing up and down in the press, and forcing their way, with much jostling and an occasional oath, the officers reached the door, and thrusting the crowd back, held them in check till the door was unbarred from within.

The crowd poured in in a flood-tide, bearing the officers every now and then from their post at the door, into the very centre of the court-room. In less than a quarter of an hour the room was overflowed, crowded in every corner, all the seats back, from the rail to the ceiling, all the passages, and some stood perched in the window-seats and about the cornices, holding on by what they could. The prisoner was already at the table inside of the bar; he had been got in by a private stairs; and when the first rush of the crowd broke in, he started in his chair and looked wildly round, supposing, for the moment, they had been let in to tear him in pieces.

He soon recovered himself, and turning his seat about, watched them as they came in, one by one. Among the first to enter was the small old man, upon whom, from the first moment, Fyler fixed his eye, and turning from time to time, watched him in the crowd. Was that man abroad yet? his look seemed to say. Fyler thought he had driven his plans so keenly, that he must have been, by this time, clean out of his wits, and pent up in some cell of madmen or other.

Presently the judge entered—a long, withered man, with a face as dry and yellow as a mummy, and a shrub of dusty-looking hair, standing off from his crown in every direction. Fyler looked up into his face as he passed, and smiled; the judge, without taking the slightest heed of the prisoner, proceeded to his place upon the bench, where he busied himself with a newspaper. In a couple of minutes more he was followed by a large, red-cheeked man, in a predominant shirt-collar, and a supple, small man, who, bestowing themselves upon chairs on either side of his honor, looked as judicial and dignified as a pair of weazel-eyes and a highly-starched shirt-collar would allow them. The court was in session; and, order being demanded by the presiding judge, there was, for five minutes, an incessant running to and fro of officers through every part of the court-room, crying, "Hats off!" and waking up every echo that had slept over-night in the angles and cobwebs of the chamber. One rushed into the outer passage, shouting, "Silence!" with such vehemence, that one might have supposed he was calling, in his distraction, for a personal friend instead of a

genius or spirit with which he was on such doubtful terms of understanding. The court was duly opened by proclamation, and at the judge's bidding a crier of the court, a white-haired old fellow, began turning a wheel, and drawing ballots on which were written the names of the persons summoned for the present trial.

One by one, as they were summoned, they emerged from the crowd and were sworn. Some had read the newspapers, and couldn't sit on the jury without hanging the prisoner. One had a theory about heads which would compel him to acquit the prisoner; and another a theory about faces which would oblige him to convict. There was a keeper of a livery-stable that never knew a man nor a horse with such an eye as the prisoner's, that wasn't vicious. More than a hundred were dismissed in this way. At last, by dint of baffling the point, and hunting scruples in at a needle's point, and out at an eyelet-hole, they succeeded in obtaining twelve men, who, though they read the newspapers, didn't believe a word of them; who knew the facts of the case, but hadn't formed an opinion; and who, though they had conscientious doubts about hanging, in any case, thought they could string a man up if the law required it.

The case was called—the prisoner was arraigned—and being helped to his feet by two officers at his side, was asked for his plea.

"I'm a ruined man, sir!" answered Fyler, looking wildly around, "and I'd like to have a pint of beer!"

Saying which he knocked his head through his hat, and, winked out at the top, at the judge, with all his might.

"I see how it is," said the judge, coolly; "remove his hat, officer—go on, Mr. District Attorney."

The district attorney, who was for all the world just such another looking person as the judge, cut down two sizes—that is, he was as dry, as hard-featured, and thin-haired, but not so tall by a head—pulled down his waistcoat and opened the case.

The crime of arson was a dreadful crime; it had prevailed to an alarming extent in this community, and he called upon the jury in that box to say whether a stop should be put to it or not. Was there a more dreadful crime conceivable, gentlemen of the jury, than the one with which the prisoner at the bar was charged? Who was safe in this community if such things were allowed? Fire, that terrible element, whose wing scathed wherever it swept (he detected in the jury-box a Presbyterian gentleman, who smiled at this allusion, and he worked it out at great length). Fire—the accredited agent of Omnipotence in balancing accounts with the world; the element by which temples, and palaces, and warehouses, were to be all wrapped into everlasting nothingness. He would be able to show the circumstances under which the buildings in question (he meant

Close's row) were fired; that it was an act of cool, fiendish, and black-hearted villany. That it had been premeditated for a long time, and that a moment had been chosen to put it in execution when a terrible loss of life must have ensued. He would show that jury that the prisoner at the bar was inspired by the spirit of a fiend, and had acted true to the spirit by which he was inspired. It was to be seen whether this community would countenance such a spirit. He sat down, and the moment he struck the seat called out for J. Q. R. Sloat.

Mr. J. Q. R. Sloat thereupon stepped forward, and proved to be a gentleman with staring eyes, a pair of thickest whiskers, and extraordinary coolness of deportment. He took the witness's stand, and, sucking his teeth sonorously, was sworn.

"You are an officer of police, Mr. Sloat?" said the district attorney.

"I am, sir," answered Mr. Sloat.

"What do you know of the firing of the buildings called Close's row, on the 19th of June last?"

"I was a-walking about that time, at nine o'clock in the evening," answered Mr. Sloat, coaxing his whiskers with his hand, and addressing himself to the jury, "along Madison street, in company with officer Smutch, when we brushed by a man in a gray overcoat. 'Smutch,' says I, when we had passed him a step or two, 'I smell brimstone!' 'So do I,' says Smutch, putting his fingers to his nose; and here let me say, gentlemen of the jury, there isn't a more indefatigable officer!"

"Never mind that," interrupted the attorney for the prisoner; "you needn't puff the police, we all know what they are!" And the prisoner's attorney smiled knowingly upon the jury.

"As I was saying when I was interfered with," resumed Mr. Sloat, rather impertinently, "'It's that man in the gray overcoat,' says I, 'and we'll track him.' The smell was strong upon him, and as Smutch and I's both quick of scent, it wasn't much to do that. The gray overcoat turned a corner, and went into an alley in Scammel street. Smutch and I followed. There the gray overcoat got down into an area, crept into a window, which was too small for Smutch and I to go in at, and we saw nothing more till there was a blaze in the middle of the floor, and the gray overcoat along-side of it, feeding it with shavings out of a basket."

"Well, sir," said the judge, hurrying him along, "you waited till the person came out, and then seized him?"

"No, sir, begging your honor's pardon, no such thing," answered the heavy-whiskered witness, bristling up; "'Smutch,' says I, 'we'll walk away for an hour, and then be back and see what comes of this.' Smutch said 'By all means,' and we went off to a porter-house and played a couple of games of dominoes, and then walked back quietly, so as to come upon the prisoner unawares."

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"Did you now arrest the prisoner?" asked the judge, sharply.

"We did not, sir," answered the officer; "but as luck would have it, when we got back there was a grand blaze of light; the buildings was all in flames. 'The best thing that could have happened,' said Smutch to me, 'for now we'll be able to catch the prisoner when we see him.' 'You're right,' says I, 'and there he goes!' A man at that minute went by the alley, and run down Scammel street at the top of his speed. 'Now for it!' I cries to Smutch, and we started off. We run him pretty keen around four blocks, and got him at last into an engine-house."

"Well, sir, you took him prisoner?" said the judge, again.

"No, sir, it was a watchman, running to give the alarm," rejoined the witness. "But we chased two or three other men, in the course of the night, on suspicion; when luck would have it, we thought of going back to the fire."

"Where you took the prisoner, I believe?" said the district attorney.

"Not quite yet, sir; there we saw the prisoner, and there we watched him on suspicion; and seeing what I did, I felt justified, at last, in taking him into custody. He tried gammon, some, but Smutch and I was too much for him. I takes no credit to myself," concluded the witness, turning to the judge, "please your honor; it was Smutch that planned the whole thing. If it hadn't been for that indefatigable man"—But he was cut short again.

The attorney for Fyler was a square-built man, with iron-gray locks, a determined eye and look, and sat confronting the witness through his evidence, with his coat-cuffs rolled back.

"Now, sir," said he, leaving his seat and taking a place where he could put his face close to the witness, "do you mean to say that a police officer has sufficient knowledge of law to know how to arrest a criminal in a case of arson? Answer, on your oath!"

"Police officers know some things, as well as other folks," he replied, looking about the court to the constables on duty, for approval.

"Now, tell me, sir—didn't the prisoner tell you, at the time of his arrest, that he was Barabbas, King of the Jews?"

"Yes, sir."

"Yes, sir—and didn't he tell you that his mother was Mary Scott, the clear-starcher, in Republican alley?"

"He did."

"And you knew his name was Close. One more question; didn't he, when you seized him, order your arm to wither?"

"Yes, sir, he did, but I thought"—

"Never mind what you thought—you forgot to mention these rather material circumstances—that'll do."

Mr. Smutch being next called upon the stand, corroborated Mr. Sloat with a single excep-

tion; he said it was owing to Mr. Sloat's unparalleled exertions and ingenuity that the prisoner was arrested, and not to himself.

During the testimony of these witnesses, Fyler was restless and uneasy, constantly murmuring to himself, putting on and taking off his dilapidated hat, and dancing his feet upon the floor. Having at length drawn the attention of the court upon him, the judge asked whether there was not some way to restrain the prisoner. Fyler's counsel answered that he believed there was a young man in court who was familiar with his ways, and who might perhaps be able to pacify him. Whereupon Ishmael Small being summoned, came forward from behind a pillar, whence he had watched the proceedings of Fyler with unbounded delight.

"Do you know this man?" said the judge.

"A little, sir," answered Ishmael, scraping the floor with his foot, and waving his crape-bound hat. Ishmael always wore a weed in public; it was more respectable, and made the public sympathize with him as a bereaved young gentleman.

"Can you mention anything to make him quiet?"

"Nothin'll make him comfortable," answered Mr. Small, with the air of an oracle, for the eyes of the whole court room were upon him—"but givin' him a small bag of gold to look at, containin' about five hundred dollars."

A small bag of gold was accordingly sent for at a neighboring broker's, in the name of the Oyer and Terminer; and being brought in was set down in front of Fyler.

"You'll have to shake it, sir," added Ishmael, appealing to the court, "to satisfy him it's the full sum."

An officer was directed to put him at rest on that point. As soon as he was assured it contained honest metal to the proper amount, he fixed his eyes upon the black brand on the outside of the bag, and was quiet.

The cobbler, one of the tenants of the row, was called to the stand. He set out in his testimony with a protest against the organization of the court; avowed a hostility to all courts and forms of law—against all proceedings, officers, sheriffs, and appurtenances of law; and was at last brought to admit, which was the gist of his evidence, that with his wife he was in Close's row on the evening it was fired.

The lightning-maker proved a much more exuberant and productive witness. He expatiated upon the domestic comforts he had enjoyed; shed tears when he spoke of his two children and his lame wife; and concluded by saying he never was more taken aback in his life, except once, and that was when Commodore Decatur was struck in the pit of his stomach with a couple of quarts of lightning, off Algiers. When called upon, in his cross-examination, to explain this incident in Decatur's career, he stated that it occurred at the thea-

tre, by mistake, when Mr. Smirk, an intemperate gentleman, performed the part of the commodore.

Two or three other tenants of the row were brought forward, who showed that they were at home in the row when the fire occurred; and the district attorney, raising his voice, said, "We rest!"

Springing from his chair at this summons, Counsellor Blast unslipped the knot of his tape-tied bundle of papers, and dashed them sideways with his hand so that they spread out over the table. Confirming the backward roll of his coat-cuffs, and dotting the floor with a discharge of tobacco pellets, he addressed the jury, in a manner peculiar to himself—sometimes starting forward with double fists, as if it were his purpose to challenge the twelve respectable gentlemen before him to a personal encounter, and sometimes ranging up and down their front, discharging a broadside of invective into the jury-box as he passed.

He had never risen, he said, under so great a sense of embarrassment in his life, as in the present case. His client, the prisoner at the bar—a poor, friendless old man—looked to him as his last hope, the final wall and barrier between himself and the grave that yawned for him. It had never been his fortune to present to a court and jury a case like this one, so full of all that appealed to the noblest sympathies of our nature. They beheld before them, in the prisoner at the bar, a melancholy case—one of the most melancholy he had ever known—of mania in a subdued form. The unfortunate prisoner was *non compos mentis*, as he meant to show, at the time of the alleged crime; and they now saw in him a wreck of what he had been.

Fyler Close, gentlemen, the prisoner at the bar, was once blessed with peace, and health, and competence, like you; but now what is he? Behold for yourselves! (Fyler was busy eating the end of a pipe-stem which had been handed to him by his counsel before he rose to open the case.) His faculties are all in disorder; his eye has lost its lustre; in a word, reason has left its throne. By a series of misfortunes, gentlemen, which it is out of the power of the best of us to foresee and guard against, this unfortunate prisoner has been deprived of all he possessed—and at one time it was considerable. It was not necessary to go into the particulars of this loss; it was enough to say he stood before them that day pleading in behalf of a starving, a penniless, and a houseless lunatic. And how was this lunacy brought on? Why, gentlemen, as you have doubtless anticipated me, by the peculiar state of his pecuniary affairs. It was four weeks and four days, as they would show by competent testimony, from the commission of the alleged act of firing, since the belief first entered the mind of the prisoner that he, the prisoner, was an angel of light. We will show you, gentlemen, that he acted up to the belief; and we will

show you further, that he, the prisoner, was of the opinion that when he had served out a brief apprenticeship of four weeks and four days as a rag-picker—being all this time an angel of light—he would become a regularly licensed angel of Fire, empowered and authorized to burn buildings and kindle conflagrations wherever he chose, throughout the city of New York. It does not appear that his patent extended beyond that. And now, gentlemen, continued the learned counsel, raising his voice, after a visit to his papers at the table; and now, gentlemen, how is this borne out? Why, gentlemen, by the most incontrovertible proofs that all his habits were regulated on this belief; that he conformed, as far as it is in sinful man to conform (this was for the Presbyterian juror, in offset to the prosecuting attorney's appeal), to his angelic calling. He had from that time forward led the life of a pure spirit in all his private acts, serving out only his probation as a rag-picker. If he succeeded in showing this—if he succeeded, as he believed he would, in proving that the insane belief had taken entire possession of the prisoner's mind—how much soever it might conflict with the policy and interests of insurers, increasing the risk, as it did, of fires—how much soever it put to the blush the religious portion of the community, who had had in this poor, aged rag-picker, an example of true and beautiful humility—he was sure of their verdict.

Mr. Clerk, call Ishmael Small.

Counselloer Blast retreated to his chair, and Ishmael, emerging from a knot of officers with whom he had been conferring, passed Fyler, casting a mournful look upon him as he went by, and appeared in the witness's stand, with his crape-wreathed hat upon his head.

The clerk presented the Bible, and hinted a removal of the hat.

"Conscientious scruples, your honor," said Ishmael, looking toward the judge, and laying his right hand upon his breast. "The 'pocryphal—give me the 'pocryphal."

It being found, on investigation, that the Apocryphal books were not included in the court version, Mr. Small consented to compromise matters by spreading his palm upon the blank pages between the Testaments, and was sworn.

"Be good enough to tell the court and jury, Mr. Small," said Fyler's counsel, "what you know of the belief that has got possession of this unfortunate prisoner's mind. When did you first begin to observe symptoms of his malady?"

"I'm inclined to think," answered Ishmael, "it's a long time since he thought he was a angel of light; but it's only lately—about four weeks and four days before the fire, as you mentioned in that eloquent openin' of yours—since he took up the business regularly."

"He seemed to consider himself a sort of angel a long time ago, did he?"

"He did, sir, judgin' by his conduct," con-

tinued Mr. Small. "He seemed to despise all sorts of plain food; and as for roast beef and baked 'taters, the very smell of the family dishes from the baker's down stairs, almost drove him mad."

"How was it about fire and clothing?"

"Worse and worse. To see how he 'ud sit in that room o' his in the sharp, blowy nights, countin' the bare bricks in the fire-place, one would ha' thought there never was such an angel for standing low temp-ratures; and as for clothing, he thought flannels was invented by a man out o' work. He was a great advocate, when he was himself, for cut-down shoes and round-jackets. That was Mr. Close's model for a well-dressed angel."

"Did Mr. Close ever assume such a dress himself?"

"He did, sir, when he began to turn out as a rag-picker. He was to be a rag-picker four weeks and four days, and then he was to be a angel of fire."

"That will do, Mr. Small," said Counsellor Blast; "you may go down."

"Stop a minute," cried the prosecutor, as Ishmael was stepping from the stand. "Do you say, sir—recollect you are in a court of justice?"

"I do, sir," interrupted Ishmael, "and I feel a veneration for that plaster-head over there that I can't express."

The audience turned in a body toward the nondescript bust fixed in a niche of the opposite wall, and laughed. The court ordered silence; the officers shouted silence; and an echo, to the same effect, came from the niche where the cast in plaster stood; and the district attorney put his question directly—

"Do you say that this prisoner's conduct has been, since the time you speak of, that of an angel?"

"Not havin' the pleasure of a personal acquaintance in that sphere of life," answered Ishmael, "I wouldn't say."

"I will ask you," continued the district attorney, "if you don't know that he was in the habit of taking heavy usury on money which he loaned?"

"If he did take twenty or thirty per cent. from a seedy feller, now and then, he learned it from a church-member that he knew—and he was the most angel-like gentleman that ever come to see him. The church-member used to tell Fyler he felt the cherrybim's wings a-fannin' him."

"Then you consider the prisoner an angel, do you?"

"All things considered," answered Ishmael, pondering and turning his hat in his hands, "I do. If there ever was a angel on earth, he was one."

"It's a lie; he was a thumping villain!" cried a voice in the crowd.

The court started to their feet; the lawyers sprang up and turned around; the officers ran to and fro, shaking their staves, and on the

lookout for the offender; there was a universal commotion.

"Bring that man up!" shouted the chief judge. The officers echoed the order from one to the other; every eye was hunting for the culprit—yet he was not found.

The prisoner knew the voice well, and would have named the peace-breaker if he had dared. It was the little old man who had been the first at the hall gates in the morning. After a while the excitement subsided, and they resumed business.

"I'd like to have that gentleman as a witness," said the state's attorney to a brother counsellor, in a whisper; and then to Ishmael, who was withdrawing from the stand—"Are you related, in any way, to the prisoner, Mr. Small?"

"I call him uncle, sir, sometimes," answered Ishmael, falling stupid, suddenly, at the question; "I'd call you uncle, sir, if you'd let me."

"Has it ever been suggested to you that there's a family likeness between you and the prisoner?"

"A family likeness," exclaimed Ishmael, "between me, a sinful eater of cutlets, and that pure-minded old gentleman that lives on fresh air and sea-biscuit! Don't mention such a thing again, sir; you hurt my feelings!"

"I see how it is," said the district attorney; "you may go down, sir."

Ishmael touched his hat to the judge, and making a graceful bow to the court-room generally, descended to common life, and resumed his post as an observer, as before.

The next that appeared in behalf of the defence, was a sharp-eyed little man (the dealer in crockery, whom Fyler had foreseen as a witness), who hopped upon the stand, and was very uneasy till he was sworn; a rite which he seemed to enjoy.

"You know the prisoner, I believe," suggested Fyler's counsel.

"I do, sir," answered the crockery-dealer, fastening upon the rail before him with both hands, and jerking his body back and forth as he delivered his testimony. "His name is Fyler Close; he lives in Pell street, up one pair of stairs; there's a bakery underneath, with a back yard; there's a cistern in the yard, but the water isn't good—that's owing to pigeon-houses in the next street; there isn't a finer collection of pigeons in the city, however—the owner's a potter baker in Doyer street—a large man, with a wen on his nose!"

"Stop, stop!" cried Mr. District Attorney Pudlin, as he would have done to a runaway horse; "you must come a little nearer the case; we don't want Longworth's Directory."

"Be good enough to tell the court," resumed Counsellor Blast, "what you know of an aberration of mind on the part of the prisoner. Answer directly, if you please."

"I will answer directly," said the crockery-dealer; "and I know this much: I was stand-

ing in my shop-door—if the court please—in the month of June last, looking about me, as is my custom, when about two blocks off I saw?"

"Two blocks?" interrupted the district attorney.

"Yes, sir, two blocks!" retorted the crockery-dealer, rather angrily; "I saw a man engaged—he was about five feet high, a little under, perhaps—the sun was setting up the street—and I saw his face was as pale as a white china dinner-set; he had on a blue round-about, a broad straw hat, and he was running backward and forward in the gutters at a terrible rate, stooping down and raising up like whalebone. 'I see how it is,' said I to myself; 'judging by the rate at which he's at work, that's an insane rag-picker.' Presently he works his way down directly opposite my shop—I keep in Division street, gentlemen of the jury, No. 19½, chinaware, earthenware, and everything, of the first quality—and by that time his basket was brim-full and running over the top of the handle; and I saw it was the prisoner at the bar."

"Well, sir, was there anything peculiar in his look at that time?" asked the judge.

"There was, sir; he looked sideways out of both eyes at once. I saw the mania was coming on him strong, for he began to fumble with his jacket buttons, and whistled for an invisible dog."

"What was the dog's name, sir; perhaps you'll be good enough to give us that," said the prosecuting attorney, looking at the jury and then at the witness.

"He didn't whistle it quite slow enough to make it out," answered the omniscient dealer in crockery; "but as soon as he whistled, and the dog didn't come, I know he dashed his basket upon the ground, and running backward first, came back to the basket again with such a supernatural leap as I shall never see again while I live; and this he kept doing till it was broad dark, and when I went in to strengthen myself with a cup of tea and a piece of toast (I like my toast done brown, please your honor), against the shock of such a pitiful sight, leaving my shop-boy to keep an eye on it. When I got back, the basket was gone, the prisoner at the bar was gone; and when I came to question the boy, I found out!"

"That will do, sir," interrupted the district attorney, bringing him to a dead pause; "we don't want to know what your boy said, or what your boy saw. Now, sir, if your friends can spare you, I'll put a question or two to you."

"He's your witness, sir," said Counsellor Blast, waiving his hand over the table.

"Now, sir, you say you judged the prisoner to be insane from the rate at which he was picking rags into his basket when you first saw him. How fast would that be, sir?"

"Why, sir," rejoined the witness, not taken by surprise in the least, "a sane man might pick a ton a day."



"Then an insane one would pick a ton and a quarter, perhaps?"

"No, I don't think that would be conclusive of his insanity—a ton and a half might."

"Will you be good enough to account for the remarkable observation you have made; how do *you* explain it?" smiling to the jury.

"Why, sir, if the court will pardon me, I should say it was owing to an increased nervous vitality in the fingers"—

"You needn't go any farther," interrupted Counsellor Blast; "We are done with you, and much obliged. We have a medical gentleman here, Mr. District Attorney, who will perhaps be able to put your mind at ease on that point. Will Dr. Mash be good enough to take the stand?"

At this request a stout gentleman in a red face, a red camel wrapper, as much overrun with frogs as the land of Egypt itself, and bearing in his hand a burly cane with an ivory head, came forward, and climbing into the witness-station, propped himself with both hands upon the cane, and looked steadily at Fyler's counsel, in waiting for a question. He was evidently loaded to the very mouth.

"Dr. Mash is so well known that I will not put the usual questions as to how long he has practised, &c.," said Fyler's counsel; "will you be good enough to oblige the court, Dr. Mash, with a definition of insanity?"

"Insanity, I would say, sir," answered the doctor, swelling till he strained his very red camel coat-fastenings, with professional pride; "insanity, I would say, sir, is a general looseness or incoherence of ideas, brought on by the overaction of the brain. For instance"—

"Ah," interposed Fyler's counsel with deference, "you will favor the court by giving an example."

"I will, sir," rejoined the doctor; "for instance, if the district attorney, there, should become so engrossed in his duties as a public officer, as to put the fines he collects into his own pocket, instead of carrying them to the city treasury; that would be a case of limited mania, or partial insanity."

There was a general laugh at this view of the case.

"That would be an example of looseness of ideas brought on by overaction of the brain, would it?" asked Counsellor Blast, grinning. "How would that apply to the case of the prisoner?"

"Very clearly, sir," answered the doctor; "the sudden loss of fortune, fixing the mind upon one point constantly—that of the loss in question—would exhaust the recuperative powers of the other faculties; and the consequence would be, that, in a very short time, the brain would go by the board."

"Have you had opportunities of observing the department of the prisoner before to-day?"

"I have, sir; and I am decidedly of opinion, as I was then, that he is disordered in rea-

son. I have seen him in the public streets, and such were my convictions as a professional man, that I thought the public safety required that he should be lodged in an asylum."

"That's all, Dr. Mash."

"Stop a minute, sir," cried Mr. Attorney Pudlin; "perhaps you will be good enough to tell us who first called your attention to the lunacy of the prisoner?"

"I think it was the young gentleman on the stand this morning," answered the doctor.

"You think?—you *know* it was, Dr. Mash," pursued the district attorney; "and now, tell me, sir, hadn't you a suspicion all along that this was a got-up thing between the prisoner and that young gentleman?"

"Not the slightest," said the learned doctor. "He seemed to be a benevolent young person, who meant well by the community—and I gave him a certificate of prisoner's lunacy."

At this there was another general laugh through the court-room; everybody that had seen Ishmael seeming to be pretty thoroughly satisfied that he was badly treated when he was called a philanthropist.

"You did, eh?" said the district attorney; "then the sheep was wronged that was killed to furnish your diploma: we are done with you—you are not wanted any more."

Dr. Mash went down, clinging to his cane in his vexation till the sweat poured from his brow.

"As it may be as well to set the jury right on this question of insanity, I'd like to put a question or two to Dr. Parsley, if he is in court," said Mr. Attorney Pudlin.

Dr. Parsley, being called, came forward briskly. He was a little bald-headed man, with glasses, and a nose as red and shining as a cherry. He hopped into the witness-stand smartly—and having his coat buttoned, and a slight shrub of hair brushed away from either side of his head, to give him a more formidable appearance—he stood ready for questioning.

"Dr. Parsley, will you be good enough to give the court your definition of insanity?" asked the district attorney.

"With pleasure," answered the bald-headed doctor, speaking up; "insanity, according to my notion, is a general concentration, not a looseness, of ideas, superinduced by the apathy or imperfect action of the rest of the brain."

"Do you think the prisoner insane, from what you have heard?"

"I do not, sir."

"Will you be good enough to tell the court and jury, Dr. Parsley, why you think the prisoner *not* insane?"

"I will, sir, with great pleasure," answered the doctor. "It appears, from a part of the testimony, that the prisoner, in his supposed attacks of the disease, jumped backward and forward over a basket. It does not appear that he ever jumped into the basket. Now, insane

men—as far as my observation extends, and it has been by no means limited—always jump into a basket, when they get a chance.”

“He is your witness,” said the district attorney.

“One question, only, doctor. How does that agree with your definition?” asked Counsellor Blast.

“Well enough—in this way, sir. If his mind had been concentrated, or overtaken to an insane degree, he *must* have jumped into the basket.”

The case was now mainly closed, and a clerk of the Phoenix company being called only to show that the buildings in question belonged to Fyler Close, and had been insured for a handsome sum in that company, rather more, in fact, than their real value; the court suggested that it was ready to hear the summing-up of the prisoner’s counsel. The plea for Fyler was brief:—he was an old man; he had lost his all; he was before them a melancholy spectacle of dethroned reason; a verdict of guilty would be a judicial murder; and he appealed to them as humane men—men having grandfathers and old uncles, to deal to the prisoner justice tempered with mercy.

The district attorney—hoisting and lowering his waistcoat incessantly, in the intensity of his eloquence—followed at greater length.

He had proved the arson beyond all question; the prisoner’s counsel had yielded that point; and now, as for the insanity, he regarded it as a fetch from beginning to end—there were certain eccentricities in the prisoner, to be sure, but not more than an old apple-woman exhibited every day in the year. There was cunning, he was inclined to think, mixed with the prisoner’s madness. Did you observe, gentlemen, in opening this case, how silent the prisoner was when his own counsel was before you? and yet, when I addressed you, you recollect he was as busy as he could well be, crushing his teeth and kicking the table in the legs. You can draw your own inference from that, gentlemen. I had expected to prove that the young gentleman who appeared on the stand, was more nearly connected with the prisoner by ties of blood than he was willing to admit; that a corrupt understanding existed between them in relation to the circumstances of the present case, there could be no reasonable doubt. I have now done my duty, gentlemen of the jury, as prosecuting officer, and it only remains for you, as good citizens, to do yours.

Calling an officer to him, and whispering him to bring a tumbler of brown-stout, by the private stairs, and place it in the folds of the ermine—the red curtain behind him—to be ready when he was through, the long judge rose from his chair, drawing himself out, joint by joint, and proceeded to charge the jury. As the sole object of the long judge seemed to be to wrap the case up in a swathing of words and generalities, to prevent its taking cold, it would be impossible to do him anything like

justice in a report. The result was, that after he had been on his legs better than two hours, when the clock numbered toward midnight, the jury—all abroad as to the facts, the law, and the equity—were put in charge of an officer and led off through a door into a small, dusty, cobwebbed, candle-lighted room, where they were locked in, in company with a small square table, to meditate upon the case.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE JURY-ROOM.

FOR the first few minutes after they entered the jury-room, not a word was spoken; they sat around the square table, which just held twelve, with their heads toward the centre, watching each other’s faces sharply for the first glimpses of a verdict.

A spider’s thread fell from the ceiling and hung dangling above the table, bearing a fly struggling at its end.

“Guilty, or not guilty, gentlemen?” said the foreman, a close-shaven, blue-faced man, with glittering eyes, glancing round the board as he put the question by way of breaking ground.

“Guilty, for one!” answered a fat citizen on his right hand, sweeping the struggling fly into his hat, which he produced suddenly from behind his chair. “We must have an example, gentlemen. The last three capital indictments got off, and now it’s the sheriff’s turn for a pull. We must have an example.”

“Three for breeders and the fourth to the bull-ring,” spoke up a gentleman with a deep chest and brawny arms. “That’s the rule at the slaughterhouse; we always follow it—and so I say guilty, if the rest’s agreeable.”

But the rest were not agreeable; and they launched into an elaborate and comprehensive discussion of the case, led on by a high-cheeked gentleman in a white neckcloth, who begged to ask whether any one there was prepared to say whether angels could, under any circumstances, become rag-pickers. That was the gist of the case. There might be angels of fire—he had heard an excellent discourse on that subject in the Brick church—and that would account for the prisoner’s burning the buildings. He had been rather pleased with the district attorney’s calling Fyler Close the demon of that element; but then, would it be in character for a demon to go about with a basket and a hooked stick? He couldn’t see into it just yet—he would like to hear the opinion of the other gentlemen of the jury on that point.

“It isn’t always easy to tell them insane chaps at first sight,” pursued another, a short juror, who, resting his elbows upon the table, looked out from between them with flat face and saucer eyes, fading far away in his head,

like the hero of a country signboard. "There was one of 'em got into our house in Orchard street one day, and when he was caught he was at work on a stun' lemon with his teeth like vengeance. Now, that was insanity at first view, but when we come to find his pockets full of silver spoons and table-knives, that was *compos mentis* and the light of reason."

"How many stun' lemons would you have a feller eat, I'd like to know," retorted the deep-chested member, "to make it out a regular case?"

"One full-grown'd satisfy me," answered the signboard, "other gentlemen might require more."

The board was unanimous on this point, one would be enough.

"I'd have you take notice of one thing, gentlemen," said a thin little man, starting in at this moment from a corner of the table, with a nose like a tack, and eyes like a couple of small gimlet-holes. "There was a point in the testimony of that Sloat—the police officer—that's very important, and what's better, it escaped the district attorney, and the prisoner's counsel, and the very judge on the bench. Now, I want your attention, gentlemen. You will recollect that Sloat testifies to a man in a gray overcoat going into an alley in Scammel street and getting into the basement of Close's row. That was the incendiary, no one doubts that. Very good. And then Sloat goes a little further, and says he is gone long enough to play a couple of games of dominoes; and when he gets back, he says a man went by the alley—mark that—went by the alley and down Scammel street. That wasn't the incendiary, was it? By no means, gentlemen. Where was he then all this time? I'll tell you." He drew his breath hard, and turned quite pale as he looked around. "It's my opinion, gentlemen, the incendiary was roasted alive in the basement of them buildings."

There was a shudder through the jury-room; the jurors turned about to each other and said, "Who would have thought of that?" and it was admitted on all hands to be a very plausible and acute conjecture and well-worthy of the gentleman in the eyelets and tack-shaped nose.

"It can't be," said the fat citizen, balancing his hat in his two hands, and looking sternly at the fly in the bottom of the crown. "If you could only make that out, we might let this prisoner at the bar off. I can't believe he was so nicely caught. No, no, if that had been the case, somebody would have found the bones done brown and a pair of shoe-buckles. Don't give way, I beg you, gentlemen, to the pleasing illusion."

And so saying, he knocked his hat upon his head and smothered the fly.

"I have great faith in that china-ware witness," said the gentleman in the signboard face. "He was right in that observation of his; a man out of his wits always talks to peo-

ple a couple o' hundred miles off, and whistles for a invisible dog. I had a cousin, gentlemen of the jury, that went mad as he was coming through this 'ere Park one day; he was a boat-captain, and was a comin' from his sloop, and he asked the liberty-goddess a-top of the hall to take snuff with him. On reconsiderin', I think Fyler Close's is a case of lunat-ics."

Two or three other jurors thought as much.

"That mug of beer satisfied me," said one.

"Would he ha' sp'ilt a new hat that his counsel had bought to give him a respectable first appearance in court with, do you think, Bill," said another, appealing to the last speaker, "if his head hadn't a been turned clean round? It's a gone ninepin, that head o' his."

"Now, gentlemen of the jury, you must excuse me a few minutes, if you please," said a stout, rugged, hard-headed gentleman, with heavy eyebrows, rising at one end of the table, and thrusting back his skirts with both hands. "This is a great moral question, whether the prisoner shall be hung or not. Am I right?" "You are!" "you are!" from several voices at the upper end of the table. "A great moral question, I say; and it's owing to a great moral accident that I am with you this day, for if I hadn't eaten too many tomcods for my supper last night, I should have been off in the seven o'clock boat this morning, to the anniversary of the Moral Reform at Philadelphia. Now the community looks to us for action in this case. If this man escapes, who can be hung? Where's the safety for life and property if we can't hang a man now and then? Hanging's the moral lever of the world, and when the world's grown rotten by laying too much on one side, why, we hang a man and all comes right again. If we don't hang Fyler Close, he'll hang us—morally, I mean."

This was a director in a fire company, who had smuggled himself upon the jury by giving out that he was a gentleman, and blinded Fyler's counsel by hinting that he was doubtful of the policy of hanging; what he said produced a sensation in the jury-room. The twelve judges began to put it to themselves, some of them, whether premiums wouldn't go up if this house-burner escaped; others, that New York might be burned to a cinder if this wasn't put a stop too, somehow or other (there had been a brilliant and well-sustained series of fires for better than a twelvemonth); and others, that as he had failed to turn his insanity to the best account by hanging himself, they would take it off his hands and attend to it—as he was a decrepit old gentleman—for him.

"Pardon me, gentlemen," said the foreman, at this stage of feeling; "I think this is a clear case for the sheriff. The prisoner is an old man; he has no friends—not a relation in the world, one of the witnesses said; he's lost his property—and as for his wits, you see what they're worth. Now, the next candidate that

comes along may be a fine black-haired, rosy young fellow, who may have tickled a man with a sword-cane, or something of that sort, with a number of interesting sisters, an aged mother, and a crowd of afflicted connexions. You see what a plight we would be in if we should happen to be drawn on that jury. Are you agreed, gentlemen?"

There was not a little laying of heads together; discussion in couplets, triplets, and quadruplets; and in the course of two hours more they agreed, and rose to call the officer to marshal them into court.

"Stop a minute, gentlemen, if you please," said the fat citizen; "this is a capital case, you will recollect, and it wouldn't be decent to go in under five hours."

"He's right," said the foreman, and "you may do what you choose for an hour."

Two of the jury withdrew to a bench at the side of the room, where, standing close to the wall, one of them planting his foot upon the bench and bending forward, entered upon a whispered interview. Two more remained at the table; while the others grouped themselves in a window looking forth upon the Park, in the rear of the hall, and amused themselves by watching a crowd that had gathered there, under a lamp, and who began making signs and motions to them as soon as they showed themselves. The most constant occupation of the crowd seemed to be passing a finger about the neck, and then jerking it up, as though pulling at a string, with a clicking sound, which—when once or twice they lifted the window, and as it seemed to be the most popular and prevailing sound—could be distinctly heard.

"This is the luckiest thing that could have happened in the world," said one of the two jurors that had taken to the wall—the gentleman in the sharp nose and weazel eyes—addressing himself to the deep-chested juror with brawny arms, who was the other; "I wanted to speak to you about that black-spotted heifer, and this is just the chance."

"You couldn't speak on a more agreeable subject," retorted the deep-chested gentleman; "but you mustn't expect me to take off the filing of a copper from the price; what I asks at Bull's Head this morning, I asks now."

"I know your way," rejoined the other; "you never come down even the value of a glass of beer to bind the bargain; but it wasn't that—what grass was she fattened on?"

"Short blue," answered the deep-chested gentleman, firmly.

"Any salt meadow near?" asked the other.

"Not more than twenty acres," responded the deep-chested juror, with the air of a gentleman carrying all before him; "and swimmin' a healthy run o' water, a rod wide, give the critter a bellyful any time."

"Two years old the next full moon, and a cross of the Durham in her, I think?"

"Not a cross of the Durham, I tell you," answered the deep-chested gentleman, raising his voice a little, "but the Westchester bottom, and hasn't known a dry day nor a parched blade since she was calved."

"No Durham blood? I'm sorry for that," said the sharp-nosed gentleman. "If you could throw me in that lamb I took a fancy to, we would close."

"Throw you in the lamb? that's a good one!" cried the deep-chested gentleman, bursting into a laugh of scorn. "Why, I wouldn't throw you in the singeing of that lamb's wool. Only five-and-twenty for the prettiest heifer that ever hoofed it down the Third avenue—and throw you in a lamb! That is a good one!" And he burst into another scornful laugh.

"Well, well," said the sharp-nosed gentleman, soothing him with a prompt compliance. "Drive her down to my stable as soon as the verdict's in."

Meanwhile, the two that remained at the table were employed.

"Have you got that 'ere box in your pocket, Bill?" said one of them, a personage with a smooth, clean face, from which all the blood would seem to have been dried by the blazing gaslights under which he was accustomed to spend his time.

"To be sure I have," answered the other, a gentleman of a similar cast of countenance, but a trifle stouter. "Did you ever catch Slicksey Bill a travelling without his tools?" He produced a well-worn dicebox from his coat, and began rattling. "What shall it be?"

"The highest cast, 'guilty'" said the other, "and three blanks shall let him go clear. That'll do, won't it?"

"Just as good as the best. It's your first throw."

The other took the box in hand, gave it a hoarse, rumbling shake—three fours. The other shook it sharply—two blanks.

"Guilty, by —," they both said together.

They then indulged themselves with a variety of fancy throws, as to the state of the weather—the winning horse at the next Beacon course—whether the recorder (a gentleman in whom they felt a special interest), would die first, or be turned off the bench by the legislature. Every now and then they came back to the case of the prisoner, and—what was singular—the result was always the same.

The hall clock struck three—the legitimate five hours were up—and the jurors gathered again around the table.

"Gentlemen, are we agreed?" asked the foreman.

"We are!" answered the jury.

"Yes, and what's queer, we've been trying it with dice, and every time it's turned out three twelves agin the prisoner; so the result's right, any way you can fix it—isn't it so, Bill?"

"Exactly!" answered the gentleman appealed to. The officer was summoned, and,

putting himself at their head, they marched into the court-room with the air of men who deserved well of the newspapers for their moral firmness; and who, at the sacrifice of their own feelings, were rendering a great service to the community.

The court-room was nearly a blank. The judge and the two aldermen had waited with exemplary patience the deliberations of the jury, and were now in their places to hear the result. Fyler's counsel, with a clerk, was there also; and the district attorney, and the clerk of the court, and two or three officers and underlings, loitering about. The prisoner himself sat at his table, a little pale, it seemed in the uncertain light, but unmoved.

The crowd of spectators had dwindled as the clock struck ten—eleven—twelve. Mr. Ishmael Small, after tarrying an hour or two, had gone out with the others, and disposed of his leisure in playing a new game of ball, of his own devising, in the west side of the Park, with a crew of printers' boys from the neighboring offices.

In the whole outer court-room there was but a single spectator, the little old man that had been the first at the hall gates in the morning, who looked on, leaning against a remote column, at the judges, who, from that distance, seemed, in the dusky shade of the unsnuffed candles standing about them, like spectres gradually fading into the red curtain that hung at their back.

"Mr. Clerk, call the jury!" said the chief judge, in a voice which great usage on the trial and the incidents of the place made to sound sepulchral.

The jury was called, man by man.

"Arraign the prisoner!" in the same unearthly and startling voice.

The prisoner was arraigned.

"What say you—gentlemen of the jury—guilty, or not guilty?"

"Guilty!"

Fyler started for a moment, but instantly recovering himself, smiled vacantly upon the judge and jury, and began whistling as described by the crockery-dealer. The little old man clasped his hands firmly together, and breathed an earnest thanksgiving from the dusky corner where he stood alone. In a few minutes it got abroad that the prisoner was convicted—a shout shook the air without, and, presently, a crowd rushed in that filled the hall afresh. The prisoner was to be taken out by the private way, but the little old man was not to be cheated this time. He had urged himself through the press, and stood against the lintel of the door through which he must pass. In a few minutes he came along. When Fyler saw who it was that watched his steps, he glared upon him. Hobbleshank gazed after him, as he passed away to his doom, with a look of unrevenged triumph.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### MR. CLOSE'S LAST SPECULATION.

IN the Tombs' prison, where he lay under sentence of death, Fyler Close maintained, as far as the limits of his cell allowed, the same sports and humors he had practised in the open air. The turnkey, who had charge of this range of cells, whenever he looked in or brought his food, never failed to come upon him in the very ecstasy of a new device or gambol. This was in the day, when Fyler would place himself in the middle of the floor, and sit, huddling his limbs together, gathering the sun that streamed in at the window of the cell at certain hours, in his outspread hands like so much fire. But with the night he crept into a corner, and stood shivering and driving off with the self-same hands, shapes that swarmed thicker than the sun-beams by day. He cursed the darkness; it was no friend of his. The very first night he had lain there after the trial, he got into the corner furthest from the door, and while he crouched there, the jurors glided across the floor, one by one, and whispered in his ears, "Guilty," then after them the judge, with the same word in his mouth, then the haberdasher, the poor blacksmith, Hobbleshank, and whoever else he had dealt with, and muttering the word so that it hissed in his ear, passed away.

One night the two lamps that light the prison-yard at the rear, and lend a ray or two to the condemned cells, went out; and Fyler, vexed beyond measure, dashed his hands against the door, and shouted for light—light! They left him alone, supposing it was some new freak, until he fell down in his agony, and was found in the morning pale and trembling, his eyes starting from his head, and his hair bristling up. The keepers wondered what he had seen to stamp such a horror in his look. With the day he recovered his strength, and tried his gambols afresh. It was the second morning after this that the turnkey entered his cell and placed his food before him, standing aside while he despatched it if he chose. This officer was square and heavy in his frame; but with one of his lower limbs so far beyond the other in length that he had the appearance, as he came along the gallery, swinging his long arms and stretching it out before him, of working a great wheel the revolutions of which drove him on. He stood against the door, his long limb planted before him like a table, and on this he rested his elbow, and regarded Fyler, who made it a part of his scheme to devour such food as was set before him with the ravening eagerness of a wolf.

"I suppose you're aware the hanging comes off next Friday?" said the turnkey, by way of sharpening his appetite.

"That's a capital idea!" answered Fyler Close, looking up from his meal, "I hope I'll

have flitters and fresh biscuit for breakfast that morning: whose to be hung, eh?"—

"You are the queerest chap!" pursued the turnkey, slapping his long leg with his knuckles. "Why, next Friday's your day—you own it and can do just what you please with it till twelve o'clock. It's only a half apple, after all. Next Friday's got no afternoon to you, old chap. Now, between ourselves, ain't you afraid to die?"

This interrogatory moved Mr. Close's mirthful feelings greatly; he rose from his bench, tossed his knife and fork high in the air, and marching to the basket that had brought his food, and which was at the turnkey's side, he cast in the great blue plate from which he had eaten, as if it had been a huge coin, and said: "There, sir, there's two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the bread and steak." He broke into a dance which extended through the cell, and occasionally included his bed, upon which he mounted, by way of interlude.

The turnkey was answered; he gathered the basket under his arm, turned for a look at Fyler, shaking his head, and locking the door, set his wheel in motion and moved away.

A week only. Fyler began, in his mind, to see the gallows-tree rising in the yard. Instead of sleeping now, as he had done all along, with some comfort, he spent the better part of the night, standing upon his bed, which he had drawn there, stretching himself up his whole length, and gazing through the narrow window of his cell, to catch a sight of men moving in the yard below, or the stars, or the line of dusky light that rose beyond the prison-wall, where men were free and walked the streets unchained. A week only. The chance of a commission to inquire into his madness, with a hope of which he had toiled so hard and long in his freaks, seemed fading fast and leaving him manacled more than ever. One trial more and he would fix his mind. The next day when the turnkey came in he took him apart, as though there had been a great crowd listening to catch every word that dropped, and in a mysterious whisper made known that he had great news for the keeper, and begged him to be brought at once. The turnkey turned about and stared at Fyler, but not knowing what there might be in his wish, went away and presently came back announcing that the keeper was at hand. This was no sooner made known than Fyler, standing out upon the floor and fixing his hand, bent up after the fashion of a horn, began blowing furious blasts. The keeper was a stout personage with an inquiring nose and dark brows; he stood in the door, filling it to a hair, and looking doubtfully at Fyler, asked what this meant?

"That's what he calls his final trump," answered the turnkey; "he was blowing trumpets all last night."

When he had blown not less than forty peals, Fyler came down his cell, and taking the keeper by the collar, led him into the middle

and turned him about so that he faced a blanket pinned against the wall. Having provided him with this eligible point of view, he pulled down the blanket and disclosed a great number of rude figures, sketched upon the stone in chalk.

"What's all this?" asked the keeper, again.

"You know he's a angel of fire, sir, as was shown at the Oyer," answered the turnkey; "and these is his victims!"

On a closer inspection one of them was found to resemble not a little the long judge; there was another, a little shambling figure with one eye out, and another, heavy-browed, and solid of port as he could be made to appear in rude chalk. This the turnkey thought was a juror who had pressed matters against Fyler at the trial. They were all scarcely more than scrambling lines upon the wall; about them was a great pother of shrubby marks and scratches—this was the fire.

"Well, sir," said the keeper to Fyler, when he had studied the lines a while; "what are you going to do with these gentlemen—with this one for instance?" pointing to the long judge.

"He's in for a couple of hundred years, only," answered Fyler; "but it's a slow fire, and it'll roast him tender before his time's out."

"You don't give a juryman as much as a judge?" asked the keeper.

Fyler feigned to be all abroad for an answer till the question was renewed by the turnkey, when it appeared that he had allotted to the juror for special reasons, a fire that was to last three hundred and twenty-five years and a day.

But the fire seemed by all odds to rage hottest in the neighborhood of the little figure with the single eye; he seemed to have never tired of piling on the fuel, and as far as chalk could represent, it was all a live coal. At first Fyler said that was to burn a week, then he added a year, then a hundred years, and so kept on extending his term, till the keeper, out of all patience, broke away.

"A clear lunacy case as ever was!" said the turnkey, appealing to the keeper with deference.

"Hold your tongue!" rejoined the keeper; "there will be no more lunacy cases. The governor was gammoned in the last case. Wearing spectacles without glasses and eating sticks for beef-steaks wont go any longer. Lock the door and come along!"

Fyler pondered on what fell from the keeper. Another rivet held his prison door—how should that and all others be drawn at once? That same afternoon he read in his cell, by close stealth, although no soul was present, a paper which had got there, Heaven knows how. Late the night before a mysterious figure, more like a goblin with interminable legs than any thing else (it might have been Ishmael Small), had stalked in the street at the back of the prison; some said afterward it had

climbed the wall. As the paper fell through his window, dropped from above, this might be so. Whatever it was, and whoever might be its sender, it quickened his thoughts not a little. It was clearly expedient for him to get back into his wits at once. Accordingly when the turnkey brought his supper that night, he found Fyler quietly seated and looking about him with the air of one just wakened from a dream.

"Where am I? who am I?" said Fyler. "How long have I been in this place?"

"Why, old fellow, you're in the Tombs, Centre-street," answered the turnkey, "where you've been these four weeks and better; and as to who you are, you're Fyler Close as you was yesterday, and the day afore, and the day afore that. That's who you are."

"You must be wrong," rejoined Fyler, quite calmly. "I have been asleep twenty-five years or so, I think. What a dream I've had! Angels about me in swarms, dressed in handsome red dresses, and beautiful cherubs carrying sticks with gilt tops."

"Oh, ho!" cried the turnkey, slapping his long knee like one that makes a great discovery—"I see how it is; them red angels that was about you so thick was volunteer firemen; and as for the cherubs they're nothing else but the indefatigables that you see in court on your trial, with their staves. Oh, ho, that's a very good one, Mr. Prisoner. I see you're a coming-to."

"So I think, too," continued Fyler, placidly. "And now that I have got back to this sinful world, I'd like a slice or two of the bread o' life, just to cheer me up and keep me from fainting."

"Something in the way of a parson, eh?" asked the turnkey, looking curiously at him. Fyler gave him to understand it was; "If that's it, you can have a whole loaf; we have a wonderful run of blackcoats to this prison. They come here to get moral texts for their sermons; you'll be a capital one—and when its known, won't there be a competition! I guess not!" The turnkey laughed disdainfully at himself; and Fyler hoped he might be made a good text, and be a comfort to some poor creatures in that way. The turnkey took his basket and keys and went away; but presently returned and, putting his head in at the door, asked Fyler, "What he'd begin with?"

"You may send me a presbyterian gentleman, if you please," said Fyler.

"You shall have one fresh and first-rate," answered the turnkey. "I'm glad you're come-to, old feller, you'll hang so much cheerfuller. Good night!" He locked the cell and propelled himself at an increased speed along the gallery, making known to the other keepers, as he passed, that the old prisoner was in his wits again.

The presbyterian came. Fyler eyed him sharply; he was tall and narrow-faced. After a very brief interview he left, finding the

prisoner not open to his counsels. Fyler confessed he didn't like his views of predestination at all, and called for another parson. The next was large and stout; and Fyler discovered an irreconcilable difference in their notions of total depravity. Then there came another, a short square man, who broached such doctrine on the subject of infant baptism that Fyler almost drove him from his cell. What a delicate conscience this prisoner had, and how hard to please! He had but three days more to live, and they would give him such comfort as they could. At last there came along, after so many trials, a snug little man, about Fyler's size, who wore a wig, and whose religious views harmonized so entirely with Fyler's that the broker took a fancy to him at once, and made him spend hours with him in his cell. Fyler spared no pains to cultivate an intimacy, and was not backward in showing his affectionate regard for the little parson. One night, after a long and delightful interview, in which the little parson had inculcated a great number of excellent principles, Fyler said to him, "Did it ever occur to you how much we resemble each other in look?" The little parson confessed it had not.

"Now I'll show that it is so," said Fyler; "let me take your wig a minute."

He accordingly removed it from the parson's head and placed it on his own.

"It would be so odd," said Fyler laughing, "if any one should come in now—I guess I'll fasten the door."

He drew a string, which was somehow or other hanging there, and the door was held close.

"Now let me have your coat," said Fyler. The little parson yielded it with some show of reluctance. Then he took his vest, his pantaloons, his shoes; then he put on his neck-stock and his plain black hat.

"Isn't the resemblance wonderful?" asked Fyler, giving the parson, who stood shivering by, a look that made him shake a little more. Fyler then invited him to another quarter of the cell, where he insisted it would be to his advantage to have a bandage put about his arms and waist, to keep him from catching cold. The little parson might have made some trifling objection, but he saw that in Fyler's look which silenced him.

"It must be death to one of your tender constitution," said Fyler, "if you should get into the gallery in your present state." He bound him to a ring in the floor, and fastened an end of the cord to the water-facet, so that the least motion on the part of the parson would flood the cell. He then placed in his hands the pocket-bible he brought in with him, and opening it at the book of Job, and commending patience to him, as the best virtue under present circumstances, he left him—shivering and bald-headed—upon the floor, and stepped lightly forth.

Moving smoothly along in his parson's dress,



and catching as much of the parson's gait as he could, he reached the prison-yard. When his feet struck the ground he felt free—but looking up, with the high prison-walls about him, he breathed hard again, like one at the bottom of a well. The sky was strangely overcast, and a chill crept through his frame. The officers of the lower door were away, and he was obliged to pass through the Sessions court-room. He stole up the steps, and looked through the glass door leading from the prison-yard into the court. A trial was going forward, and the court-room was thick with people. He looked on for a moment with a curious eye, remembering his own; and then shrunk back, shuddering at the prospect of passing through. With a keen sense in himself of what his parson's dress concealed, he feared they might seize him and hurl him back to the cell he had left. He opened the door—the officers glanced at his black coat, and tapped the nearest of the crowd to give him way. With a respect for the errand of charity on which they supposed he had been bound, they fell back, leaving a wide space through which he must pass to the outer door. He would rather they had stood close packed, and treated him in that regard like the meanest of themselves. At length, with a heart fifty times at his throat, he was upon the outer stairs; creeping stealthily down from column to column, he reached the street. He started forward at a swift pace, but becoming presently confused, he halted and looked about. There was a trouble in the sky—a darkness, not of tempest or customary clouds; an eclipse was brooding above him. A cold shadow filled the air, and Fyler was bewildered and alarmed. At first he went to the right, and coming upon an object that told him he was wrong, he returned upon his track and went as far astray on the other hand. He had lost his way, and seemed to have forgotten, all at once, the bearings of the streets. While he wandered in this uncertain mood, the cold drops starting to his brow, there came upon the wind a loud clamor of drums and trumpets and marching feet. Torches flashed upon the darkness—as a long procession turned a corner—and Fyler, aided by their light, crept along a coal-yard wall.

In a minute more he was at an opening of the great sewer, which was undergoing repair; falling flat upon his face that no eye might watch him, he crept down its mouth, holding on to the broken stones and fastenings of iron with his hands, till he reached the bottom. He heard the tread of feet above him—a gleam of light—and all was silence and darkness. How far within he ever groped his way was never known, nor what scheme he had in view, unless it might have been—wild and bold enough—to escape in this way to the river, where Ishmael Small, it was said, had been seen for many hours hovering in a boat about that mouth of the sewer.

Nor was Ishmael himself, who had the morning after the arrest borne away an old trunk or two from the den in Pell street, seen after that night. The last act that could tell where the broker stopped, was, that passers-by had heard at a certain place, as they crossed the street, a sharp and dreadful cry for help, riving the very earth beneath their feet. The broker's body, perishing thus amid all the foulness and infamy of the city's drain, was never found.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### THE NIGHT PROCESSION.

THE unparalleled outrage of clearing the upper Wabash, being sufficiently insisted upon, answered the purpose as well as any device they could have contrived. The triumph of Puffer was complete. He had carried his election by a handsome majority—bowling down Mr. John Blinker, majestically as he carried himself, as easily as a ninepin with a rolling bottom—Hobbleshank's strong recruits (of which Puffer had just now heard) coming in to give the decisive blow. The popular mind, still heaving and surging, searched for a channel through which to vent the enthusiasm (in such cases there's always a little over) which had not been exhausted in the contest itself. The Bottomites resolved to make a public demonstration of their victory—one to allure new friends and terrify old enemies—and a street-parade, a grand procession by torchlight, was fixed upon as most imposing. The newspapers began immediately to trumpet the show; the wire-pullers and busybodies in every direction were on the alert, dusting their banners and waking up their retainers. In a week from the election the preparations were concluded, and at sundown of the day appointed, the forces of the procession began to assemble in the Houston street square, East river. Two men were seen with highly flushed faces, the dawn of the procession, to roll off a couple of barrels around a corner from a neighboring pump, and hoist them upon a truck behind a canvass banner, which denoted that these were two genuine and unadulterated barrels of the water of the upper Wabash, in its aboriginal condition before the clearing under the new bill. A few minutes after, two other flush-faced gentlemen came around another neighboring corner with a couple of rolling barrels, which were duly planted on a second truck, and which were, in like manner, given out as so much pure fluid drawn from the mighty Hudson by an aged sailor, who would ride in one of the barouches. Presently, a body of horsemen, with new beaver hats and blue ribands at their buttonholes, came scampering distractedly into the square, and rode about issuing enthusiastic orders, and inspecting with military ac-

tivity the condition of the square, from one end to the other. These were the marshals of the procession; and in less than a couple of minutes they were followed by numerous detachments of one kind and another, dropping in at different points. In an hour the square was full of horsemen, pedestrians, barouches, carts, banners—and, for a time, there was an unbroken hubbub of shouting voices, and an inextricable confusion and entanglement of all classes and orders of society.

By dint of driving up and down at the top of their speed—riding every now and then over a child or an old woman, assailing a detachment of clamoring clerks in a high voice of command, or imploring, with bended knees in their saddles, a squad of mounted cartmen—they succeeded in forming the line. A gentleman in a dirty round jacket, filled his trumpet till it overflowed; a short-legged drummer dashed his sticks against the parchment; the crowd gave three cheers, as they do when a ship breaks from her stays, and the great Bottomite procession was launched upon the streets. There was a barouche, containing a standard-bearer, with two committee-men to fill up, that led the van; then a barouche bearing two ancient residents on the Wabash (brought on expressly for this occasion), extremely pale and sickly—as might have been expected—and obliged to be fed out of a bottle, by a boy in the carriage with them, to keep the breath in their body. This device the crowd approved of, and gave three cheers more as they trotted in the wake of the procession. Then there was a barouche with two fishermen—great, sturdy, grampus-like fellows—educated, of course, on the banks of the Hudson, and chewing pigtail in evidence of the holiness and majesty of the anti-Wabash cause.

But when, behind these, the crowd caught sight of another barouche—wrapped round and round with banners—the very horses trotting forward in trowsers made of striped bunting, there was no limit to the popular enthusiasm. In this, the Hero of Kipp's bay—the redoubtable Champion of New York—the illustrious Hopkins himself, stood up, and removing his hat, waved it pleasantly to the crowd, at full arm's-length, as though he was bailing up their cheers, and pouring them out of the hat into the barouche. High above his head danced the banner wrought by the dark-eyed young lady—the blank filled as she had wished—"Uncompromising hostility to the clearing of the Wabash.—For Congress, Puffer Hopkins, the Hero of New York!"

In the carriage with Puffer rode Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, who had assumed a clean ruffe, of extraordinary dimensions, and whose very waistcoat seemed swelling and ready to burst with a speech, with which he was no doubt prepared to explode the moment he should be touched. Then there were the fire companies—the earnest and ardent friends of the successful candidate—all in their red shirts and leather caps,

dragging their engines by the rope, and joining in the cheerings of the crowds with lusty voice. A throng of sailors, surging and swaying along, twelve abreast and arm-in-arm, in duck trowsers, blue shirts, and hats of tarpaulin; and then, in an uninterrupted line, in seventeen carriages, the seventeen wards of the city, represented by as many emblematical gentlemen; the first second and third being solid, substantial old fellows, with well-fed persons, and a cross of the Dutchman in their look; the sixth, a strapping, raw-boned genius, with a cane in his hand quite large enough for a club or shillelah; the seventh, a plain citizen, evidently, by his dress and aspect, rising rapidly in the world; the fifteenth, a dainty gentleman, with a well-plaited ruffled shirt, and copious rings upon his fingers; and so throughout the seventeen. In strong contrast came a shoal of wobegone, unhappy-looking gentlemen, who called themselves, in a portentous banner which they bore above their heads, the "Proscribed watchmen" (they complained that the public offices, to which they had acquired a legal right, by ten years' uninterrupted possession, had been taken from them), and they wore their caps hind-foremost to denote the depth and agony of their bereavement. With these—a fellow-sufferer in a common cause, there rode, in a single gig, a lady of a venerable aspect, who had for fifteen years dispensed at one of the public watchhouses, pigs'-feet and coffee to the watchmen, as they came in from their rounds. She was the mother of five children—her husband, now dead, had lost an arm in an election riot—and she, a widow, had been ruthlessly thrust from the watchhouse. All this was expressed in the banner which her eldest boy carried above her, on which were painted the goddess of liberty, with a crape around her liberty-cap (to denote the lady's widowhood); a one-armed ghost, appearing from a neighboring tomb (her late husband); and a table spread in a corner of the standard, at which five small skeletons were represented as feeding on peasoup out of a large blue bowl.

This division of the show was received by the crowd with an outbreak (as it was described in the newspapers) an outbreak of irrepressible indignation. Public opinion is always outraged in such cases, and follows the perpetrators, they said, as surely as the shadow the sun; and here came public opinion itself. Through all the length and breadth of the United States there is, at all times, supposed to be rolling a great sphere or ball—pausing sometimes at villages which it takes in its way, then at cities or hamlets—but ever rolling on, on, along the seaboard, up mountain-sides—bounding and rushing through valleys—growing steadily larger, larger, and keeping up a horrible rumbling and tumult wherever it moves. The knocking to and fro of this mighty ball is a favorite sport of congress-men, editors, and others, who find a great diversion, in their sedentary and arduous labors, in racketing it about.

It was this mighty ball that was set in motion in behalf of the lady in the single gig; and typifying this—public opinion, which rolls and gathers like an avalanche—a great canvas wheel was now pressed forward at the rear of the single gig, by an axle, at either end of which toiled a dozen or two sallow gentlemen with rickety legs, who, in the present case, stood for Congress and the public press. Directly behind public opinion, and taking such advantage of its motions as he could, in a special hackney-coach, to preserve his invaluable health from the assaults of the night-air, came Colonel Clingstone, a venerable revolutionary veteran, whose patriotic ardor had been incontestably established by his eating an entire British ox (the property of a cowboy) during the first week of the war, which proved to be so substantial diet that he was able to live on the very name or shadow of it ever after—seasoned with a rumor of some gunshot wound or other. In the rear of the venerable colonel—who did not fail from time to time to show his frosty head at one window or the other, just to see how public opinion got along—there swarmed a lean, cadaverous, deadly-looking troop, in soiled garments and battered hats, and headed by our electioneering agent, Mr. Nicholas Finch, with a banner representing a group of citizens greatly cast down and with pocket-handkerchiefs at their eyes, weeping profusely at the tomb of Washington. It was observed of these gentlemen, who had chalked their faces to an interesting paleness to create public sympathy, that whenever the revolutionary veteran thrust his portly person into view, one or other of them would mutter between his teeth, "Cu's that old chap! he's had fat pickings forty years from a pin-prick!" The sympathies of the crowd were evidently with the cadaverous followers of Mr. Finch.

"I know them fellers," said a squint-eyed bar-tender, who was on the look-out; "them's Finch's hunters; they're wonderfully ill-used gem'men—they wants berths in the custom-house, for the sake of their country, and their country wont let 'em take the berths! Ain't that a hard case, Joe?"

"Crueller nor the anaconder!" answered Joe, a dependant of a neighboring bakery; "I say let every man bake his bread in the gov'ment oven, if he likes to. Don't we own the gov'ment—and what's gov'ments good for if they can't do a man's private washing, and ironing, and bread-baking? That's my views?"

The lean gentlemen, in a word, were office-seekers, ambitious to serve the public on any terms; belonged to either side, or both sides, as occasion required. It was a great wrong to keep them out of place, for if they expended half the ardor in serving the public which they did to serve themselves, public affairs must have been managed with extraordinary prudence and despatch. Poor fellows! they were in a sad plight; no bread nor beef at home, and their

ungrateful country refusing to cash their bills. It was as much as Mr. Finch could do, moving about and whispering cheerful promises in their ears, to keep them in spirits to go through their parts in the procession.

Behind these, comfortably quartered in a series of light wagons, followed a body of gentlemen in high glee, rosy-gilled, laughing and making merry of every object on the road. They seemed entirely at their ease, and to have nothing to do in this world but to carry certain torches which they waved and flaunted about their heads as in pastime, and merely to show the world how comfortable they were. It is hardly necessary to add, that the gentlemen in the light wagons were office-holders; and that in evidence of their grateful remembrance of the man who founded *such* a government, they carried a full length of the Father of his country. On a closer inspection, certain members of the Bottom Club might have been discovered settled in the light wagons; they had doubtless left off ameliorating the condition of society in order to devote their undivided attention to their own comfort and the public service, on which their outcry had quartered them. Behind these, singling himself out from the common herd, a little man marched about a platform, which he had caused to be built at his own private expense, and borne up on the shoulders of four sturdy partisans, blowing a small brass trumpet, of great depth of wind, from time to time, and waving a small white flag with great earnestness about his head. This gentleman, too, was ambitious of office, and by no means inclined to have the magnificence of his claims confounded with the demerits of the gentry who plodded on foot.

And then came scampering forward, Mr. Sammis at the head of a hundred and fifty mounted cartmen; and as they rode in their frocks, tottering and tumbling in their saddles, they resembled not a little a hundred and fifty clowns in an equestrian pantomime, slightly beside themselves with strong drink.

There was a part of the line obscured by a cloud of hangers-on, from which a report of lusty voices constantly broke in cries of "Here's the extra infantry!" "Terrible murder, sir, don't tread on my toes!" "Only three cents, and full of pipin'-hot soocides and seductions!" When, in turning a corner, the cloud broke, it disclosed, in their usual undress uniforms of baggy caps, half coats, and inadequate breeches, a detachment of newsboys, bearing aloft, with an air of haughty defiance, numerous paper ensigns, on which were inscribed "Freedom of speech and plenty o' pies!" "Long-nines and liberty!" and other decisive axioms of the newsboy creed.

At the heels of the news-boys, there fell in great swarms of citizens, in long coats, short coats, hats, caps, badges, and locked arms; and, when every joint was set, it began, at first slowly, but afterward with increased motions, to creep like a three-mile snake, along the streets. As

far as the eye could reach either way, there was a tumultuous flow of faces—lighted up by torches, borne on high shadowed by banners and emblems, seeming to fill the city, and hold possession of the night at every point.

The drum beat, the trumpet sounded, the marshals in an ecstasy of excitement, hurried up and down the line—there was one in buckskin breeches and military top-boots, who did immense execution in clearing the line of the kerbstone by riding over loafers and women who stood in the gutters—the procession moved on. With flaring torches they filed through the streets, turned the distant corners—and swept in in their course whole armies of recruits. About the chief divisions of the line the populace clustered in swarms, and the rear-ward was swelled with a great crowd of laggards, who in tattered garments, many of them shoeless and hatless, shambled after. Wherever they passed there were innumerable faces at the windows, peering out; and the sidewalks were thick with gazers. Like a turbid stream it rolled on, street after street, staying itself only for an instant, at different houses, to heave a great cheer in compliment to some friend of the party who dwelt within, or a portentous groan in condemnation of an enemy. When they arrived at a narrow street that crossed their way, they came to a dead halt. A stumping noise, in the deadly silence, was heard upon the steps of an oyster-vault—a jolly face presented itself—the crowd burst into a cheer of recognition—Mr. Jarve Barrell laid his hand upon his breast, waved his hat—and the crowd passed on.

At length, in an overwhelming flood of a thousand tributaries, they poured down upon the great square in front of Fogfire hall. At a given signal, and as one man, the vast gathering bellowed forth cheer after cheer—the very air rocked. The torches were gathered in a ring, shedding a gloomy light upon the Park, and on the tall gaunt buildings hard-by; a gallows-tree was brought from a neighboring deposit. As soon as it was planted in the centre of the square, the red-shirted firemen swarmed in from every direction at its foot—a chain dropped from its summit—a blazing fire kindled beneath, and a hoarse voice shouted through a trumpet, “bring him forth!” The crowd shuddered involuntarily—but when they saw what it was that hung dangling from the chain, they burst into a huge laugh. All the uplands and winding ways of the city, wherever the eye could reach, were set thick with faces, fixed upon the gallows with its iron fingers ready to pounce upon the victim. It was a portly little figure with a white head and green coat—a pair of supercilious eyes, (these they couldn’t see), altogether not more than eighteen inches high. Such as were near enough said it was the great insurance president—Mr. Blinker, the late opposition candidate, reduced half a dozen sizes or so, and it was given out that he was brought to his

present ignominy by the firemen, who may be supposed to have harbored a special ill-will against one who, by his constant presence at burnings and conflagrations, caused their sport to be stayed half way. However this was, he had been brought thither in an engine chamber, and was now swinging above the flames which crackled up and lovingly licked his feet, while the engine men stood grinning about. For a long time he hung, swaying to and fro, toying as it were with the fire, to the infinite delight of the crowd, who gathered in masses upon the wagons, barouches, trucks, even upon each other’s shoulders, watching the progress of the immolation. At length fire took upon his person. “It’s caught his right boot!” cried one. There was an uproarious shout. “It’s caught his left!” There was another still louder. But when the flame began to invade the vital parts, there were no limits to their satisfaction, which they expressed by ironical calls to the firemen to put him out.

“Why don’t you play upon his second story and upper-works, you fellers! Give him a jet in th’ abdomen! Why will you let the cruel flame take the venerable man by the nose in that way!” It was to no purpose; and though, as the blaze twinkled in his eyes—looking mischievously into their very sockets—he seemed to frown scornfully upon them, in the course of half an hour, during which the volunteers had given the fire many an ugly stir, the great insurance president, with all his dignity of person and majesty of look, was a cinder, picked up by a quidnunc, and in less than an hour deposited in the neighboring museum, among the bears and alligators, and potted beetles there preserved. Some say that this was Crump, the secretary of the Phoenix company, who had made himself active in feeding the flame by which the president had been burned.

This business over—Mr. Blinker done to a turn—to the entire satisfaction of everybody present, there was a loud call upon Puffer Hopkins for a speech; which call his associate, Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, was quite anxious to respond to.

“Let me answer it!” said Mr. Fishblatt; “I’ll tell them a thing or two about the old villain we’ve just burnt. I know him from his cradle. They expect something about him.” And while Puffer kept his seat, Mr. Fishblatt mounted to his legs in answer to the summons. A broad, universal sibilation or hissing, admonished Mr. Fishblatt that his orations were not, just then, in request, and he dropped back into his seat like one stricken with a ball.

There was the broad sky above them—the surging sea of heads—the goddess of justice, in snow-white wood, at his back—the streaming banner and refulgent transparency of Fogfire hall in front, and, by no means least of all, the two pure barrels of Hudson, and two of reeking upper Wabash, under his very eye,

upon the trucks; could Puffer fail out of all these to frame a triumphant speech? He could not, and, as he concluded, three peals, four times renewed, rent the circuit, and made the very pennons rustle in the air.

Re-forming as soon as they could recover from the bewilderment of the harangue, and in much less order than they had set out, the procession returned up the city in the direction of the Tombs. Though the music still sounded, and the torches still flared against the sky, a sudden depression seemed to have fallen upon the crowd. Many of the standard bearers dropped their standards, and allowed them to trail in the dust; great numbers left their places in the ranks and skulked away. A change had come over the very heaven itself; the face of the sky was dark—not with accustomed clouds or shadows—the great shadow of the earth itself was spreading over the firmament; an eclipse was at hand. At this moment, and while yet there was some show of triumph and rejoicing in the crowd, Puffer's attention was withdrawn to a dark figure, which, scudding away from the glare of the procession, coasted along the walls, turned a corner and disappeared, as though it had dived into the earth. The contrast of this single silent figure, and the great tumultuous crowd, was so marked, that Puffer's mind was strongly fixed upon it.

The darkness deepened, and multitudes kept falling off; among others, Puffer descried Mr. Sammis, as he left his place and passed by, looking up and smiling as he passed.

Then Mr. Fishblatt ordered a sudden halt, and without a word of explanation disappeared from his side. What could this mean? Were all things coming to an end? He was meditating upon the incident, when a small, spare figure—which he had noticed throughout the night hovering about the carriage, and keeping its face turned constantly toward his own, on whichever side he looked, but which, in the uncertain light he could not more closely discern—leaped upon the wheel and twitched him by the sleeve. How like it was to a similar summons at the very outset of his career! A voice was at his ear entreating him to leave the carriage.

"You know you are mine, now!" said the voice.

It sounded other than it ever had before.

"To see your friends at the farm-house, I know," answered Puffer, bending toward the questioner; "but why not come into the carriage with me; and ride out together?"

"No, no, you could not get out of the line," answered the other quickly. "You will not deny me this wish? Come quickly—it darkens apace."

Puffer did not hesitate—the pageant was fast growing to an end—but seizing a favorable pause, escaped to the ground and followed the other cautiously through the crowd.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### HOBBLESHANK AND PUFFER HOPKINS VISIT THE FARM-HOUSE.

IN a few minutes they were beyond its skirts, and moving at a good pace toward the suburbs. Hobbleshank led the way at such eager speed, looking forward to his path and back to Puffer, constantly, that it was some time before the young steps that followed reached him, and when they did, Puffer found him so pale and shaken by fatigue, it seemed, he begged him to borrow his support.

Hobbleshank accepted it at once, and, with a smile of hope and trust in his look as he turned to answer, leaned upon Puffer, and they pursued their way. The old man's guidance and the young man's strength bore them swiftly on. When they looked back, from an eminence they had reached in travelling up the city, the procession, they saw by the flaring torchlight, was crumbling in pieces; detachment after detachment falling off in flakes, and with drooping banners, melting in the neighboring streets.

As the old man and his companion moved along, there crept out upon the air a thick darkness—the earth's shadow lay, every minute, closer and closer to the pale moon above. The houses seemed, in the ghastly light, like ghosts or spectres of their former selves; the church-steeple, quenched in the dim atmosphere, were broken off at the top.

The passengers they met as they advanced came toward them, wrapped in the strange darkness, like travellers from another world. The great heart of the city itself seemed to grow still and be subdued to a more quiet beating under the heavy air that oppressed its church-towers and its thoroughfares. Hobbleshank and Puffer drew closer to each other's side at every step.

"You had not forgotten that you were mine to-night?" asked Hobbleshank.

"Not at all!—how could I?" answered Puffer. "I am yours now and at all times."

"You are?" interrupted Hobbleshank, quickly; "thank Heaven for that!"

"To be sure I am," continued Puffer. "You have made me what I am (I know this in more ways than one), and I am your creature as much as the pitcher is the potter's to carry me where you will, and to put me to what uses you choose. I am not sorry that the farm-house, now your own again, is the first to visit."

"Never mind that," returned the old man. "But now that you have grown to be a great man, no matter how, won't the world be asking questions of your early life and history? What can you tell them, eh?"

Although this was spoken in a cheerful tone, he drew a hard breath as it escaped him.

"Not much," answered Puffer; "I don't know that I would tell the world anything, let

them ask as much as they choose; but to you, my good old friend, always true, I may say that I had no early life."

"You don't mean," interrupted Hobbleshank, quickly, "that you ever suffered from want of food, or lodging, or warmth? In God's name, you don't say that!"

Puffer was startled by the old man's eagerness, and seeing with how anxious a look he hung upon him, he answered at once:

"Oh, no—never that—I meant merely that my childhood had neither father's nor mother's care; and can there be life without them? But I ought not to repine—I had kindness and some friends. As I meant to tell you, my first seven years were passed with a boatman, who lived on the edge of the North river, near Bloomingdale; where I came from at first, I don't know—although he used to tell me I was found by him in the woods when an infant."

"In the woods?" said Hobbleshank, cheerfully, "Go on, go on, you couldn't have been found in a better place."

"The boatman's wife or some one that was near to him died," continued Puffer, wondering at the old man's enthusiasm. "His heart broke, his affairs went into decay, and I into the Banks street asylum, as an orphan. When I had been there some six or seven years, one day there came into the room where we were all seated, our faces just shining from the towel, a stout, white-headed, rosy gentleman, of a middle age; and pitching his eye upon me, after ranging up and down the bench, said, 'This is the boy I spoke of?' The matron answered it was."

"Very good," said the rosy gentleman. "His name is Puffer Hopkins; and when he's of age let him draw this check." He handed a paper to the matron, and, smiling upon me once more, went away.

"What does this mean?" asked Hobbleshank, anxiously. "He was no relation of yours."

"I don't believe he was," answered Puffer, laughing. "Although I learned on inquiry in the neighborhood, years after, when I had drawn the money he had left me, that he had been a bachelor who had married late in life, and been much mocked and joked at for having no children. He had given out that they might be mistaken, and, by frequent visits to the asylum and this goodness toward me, succeeded in getting his gossips and aspersers off the scent. He was dead, and his wife too, when I inquired, and that was all I ever knew of him."

"It was a joke, then; a mere joke?" said Hobbleshank.

"I suppose it was," answered Puffer. This answer seemed to be a great comfort to the old man, for he breathed more freely, and they hurried on at a quicker pace.

The mighty shadow of the eclipse deepened and grew heavier upon the earth. Foot-passengers paused and stood still in the

road. The trees in the fields looked like solid shadows; the sound of wheels died away in every thoroughfare. All life and motion were arrested for the time; everything was at a pause but Puffer and Hobbleshank; they were moved by impulses, it would seem, not to be stayed or dampened even by a disastrous darkness, or the obscuration of the sky. The blue heavens, they knew, lay beyond the apparent shadow, and they pressed on. They came to a steep road, and as they climbed this, Hobbleshank clung closer than ever to Puffer. At its top was an old country house, from the windows of which cheerful lights gleamed upon the darkness. The moment they came in sight of this the old man trembled as with an ague, and fell upon Puffer's arm for support.

They were almost at its threshold, when, Hobbleshank arresting Puffer, they paused, and the old man turned so as to look him full in the face. It was evident there was something on the old man's mind he had reserved to this moment.

"Was there nothing," he said at length, like one who lingers to gather resolution, "was there nothing the boatman gave you as evidence of the place you were found in?"

"To be sure there was!" How the old man's look was renewed to youth, by these few words, and shined in Puffer's. "To be sure there was—I forgot to mention it, but not to wear it with me always in my breast, with a hope." His hand was in his breast, but Hobbleshank stayed him, and told him "not yet—not yet—it will be time presently." He would not trust himself to look at it.

Puffer knew something of the old man's mood, and followed him silently as he led the way. There had been cheerful voices from within the house, but when it was known that Hobbleshank and Puffer were at hand, a dead stillness fell upon the place; it was as if the old house itself listened, in expectation of what was to be told.

They were no sooner within the hall than Hobbleshank, pointing to a door at the left hand, said, "In there—go in quickly—God grant that all may be right!"

While Hobbleshank walked the old hall, the dim figures on its walls, watching him, as he might regard them as so many good spirits, or evil spectres, Puffer found himself in a small room, an antechamber, with two persons, one a woman, stout, hale, and of middle age; the other, a man, spare of person, and of a sorrowful and forlorn look. They both stood before him as he entered, with looks riveted upon the door with a steady gaze. The moment he crossed its threshold, a swift change crossed their features—their whole expression was shifted, like a scene, from that of dreadful doubt to one of certainty and confirmation.

"It's Paul—little blackberry Paul—although the berry's worn out in course of time," said the woman, speaking first and closely perusing Puffer's features; "do you know us?"

Puffer's mind was sorely vexed and troubled; he knew them, and yet it seemed he knew them not, for he could call neither by name.

"If I dared to hope it," he answered at length, scrutinizing his countenance, "I might say this is my early friend, who brought me to be a boy seven years old; but I don't believe it!"

The man seized his hand quickly, and told him he must, for he was no other.

"You don't recollect *me*, then?" said the woman, somewhat cast down by the inequality of Puffer's memory; "you certainly haven't forgot Hetty—Hetty Simmons, it was then, Hetty Lettuce now—your old nurse? Ah, me! I can't be changed so sadly since then!"

After a while Puffer—she pressed him to it—admitted that he caught now and then a tone in her voice that he ought to know.

"Now, to tell the truth," said Hetty, a little vexed, "I didn't know your face either; but I knew your voice the minute I heard it at Bellevue the other night; it was me that fastened that bracelet on your arm the night you were stolen away."

"What bracelet?" said Puffer. "You don't mean the one I wear in my breast?"

"Sartain—the very one," answered Hetty; "Let's see; I guess it's a match." Hetty held in her hand a half bracelet; in a minute more she had Puffer's;—they were matches, as she had guessed; the same auburn hair—the same golden clasp. She threw open the door. Hobbleshank stood there like one in a swoon—white and trembling, his two hands hanging like dead branches at his side.

"Come in," said Hetty; "good heavens, it's all as we thought!"

At this bidding Hobbleshank staggered across the door-sill, and casting himself upon Puffer's neck, muttered brokenly, "My son—my son!" The tears fell from his old lids like rain. Mrs. Lettuce, and the other, laying the broken bracelet upon a table by the side of the great breast-pin which was there already, took each other by the hand and silently withdrew, leaving father and son to know each other, after a lifetime's separation, in peace. With halting words, with tears and passionate embraces, Hobbleshank made known to Puffer the chances of his past life, how his mother died—he did not tell him all, there were dreadful words he could not trust himself with—how he was lost—how in twenty years he had often thought his child found again, but was so often sore baffled and almost broken in hope. From the first he felt that Puffer was his child and no other; he dared not claim him till the last rivet fastened him back, as it had to-night.

For many hours they had lingered together, dwelling upon the past, so full of hope and fear and strange vicissitude, when Hobbleshank, starting up as though it had just come into his mind, said:—

"What will they think of us? Come,

Paul, we have friends hard by that must not be forgotten."

He led him along the hall, and, with his hand in his own, they entered another room, larger than the first, where a company sat, in an attitude of expectation, looking toward the door, and watching it as it opened. They knew, without a word, what the story was. It was Hobbleshank and his long lost, new-found son. They looked upon him whom they had all known as Puffer—now that he was Paul, and the old man's child—with new eyes. How kind in Hobbleshank, to bring together such, and such only, as he knew Puffer (for so we love to call him still), would most desire to meet. There was Mr. Fishblatt, standing with his skirts spread, in the middle of the floor, ready to open upon the case at the first opportunity; and at his side Mr. Sammy Sammis, whose face, from being a cobweb of smiles on ordinary occasions, was now a perfect net, in every line and thread of which there lay lurking a gleam of welcome. Then there was old aunt Gatty, who smiled too, but afar off, like one who has not quite so sure a hold of the occasion of her smiling as might be desired, and seated near Dorothy, who whispered in her ear, and did what she could to make her conscious of the change that had come over the fortunes of her old friend. Not far from these, something of a shadow in their midst, was Puffer's early friend, the forlorn stranger; and Mrs. Hetty Lettuce, who had not altogether recovered her spirits from the shock of not being recognised by her boy and nursling. But who are next—to whom Puffer gave his earliest gaze—where his eye lingered so long? No other than the little old aunt and the dark-eyed young lady.

Puffer shook hands with them one and all; as if he were starting the world anew, and wished to set out well. There was no lack of voices, one might be well assured. Mr. Fishblatt, at the top of his, declaiming upon it as one of the most extraordinary, unparalleled, wonderful histories he had ever known. (He had heard but the half yet.) Mr. Sammy Sammis corroborating, and Hobbleshank running from one to the other, and demanding, in a highly-excited state of mind, opinions upon his boy. Then he would come back again, requiring to be informed whether he hadn't done well—whether all had not been managed with great discretion, and as it should have been.

"Hold there a minute," cried Mr. Halsey Fishblatt at one of these questionings. "Are you sure of your title here?"

"Quite sure," answered Hobbleshank.

"What, sir!" retorted Mr. Fishblatt, "won't the state come in as the successor to the broker, who, as a prisoner, is a dead man in the law, and seize the farm-house?"

"Ah! you haven't heard the story of the deed," answered Hobbleshank, quickly. "Who



has kept that back from you? You ought to know that."

And he proceeded to give him a full and authentic account of the marvel by which it had been preserved, rescued, and transmitted to his hands by Fob and his pale country friend.

"Come and sit by me," said aunt Gatty, in a voice so affected by age that every other word was at the ceiling and the next plumb-down upon the floor, "come here by your old aunt." Puffer placed a chair by her side; she seized both his hands in hers, regarding him steadily for some minutes, and then said, still gazing, "How like his mother!—very like—don't you see it, Dorothy?"

Dorothy, although she had never seen that lady, rather than cross her old companion in her whim, admitted it was marvellous.

"That's her eye exactly—but her hair—was that black or flaxen—how was that, Dorothy, you remember? How old are you, my child—ten—perhaps twelve—ah, I forget ages wonderfully," and she fell off into an idle pondering. She evidently supposed the world had stood still for at least fifteen or twenty years. Dorothy shook her head to the company round, and soothed her aged friend as she could. She presently after brightened a little, and asked if this old man they saw was the Hobbleshank whom she was bound to watch and guard as a death-bed trust—by a promise at his mother's bed-side fifty years old at least. It was the same, Dorothy answered, and this was his son. Aunt Gatty smiled at the news, and fell into a new vacancy.

There was a close and whispered interview on Puffer's part with the dark-eyed young lady, which, strain their ear as they might, was pitched in far too gentle a key to be guessed at by any round, unless it might have been the smart little aunt who sat by, brightening up as it advanced as though it afforded her infinite satisfaction to see how close and whispered it was.

"I buried my only daughter," said the sorrowful boatman, when Puffer questioned him, "many months ago—you remember her—your little play-fellow—whose blue eyes you used to watch so closely?"

Puffer did—but years had changed the hue of his mind, and with that the color of the eye that fixed his fancy most.

The sorrowful stranger sighed, and Puffer turning away with some kindly thought at his heart, fell into the hands of Mrs. Lettuce, who stood near by with a candle and motioned Puffer to follow her. She crossed the room and led him into a small chamber at its side. The chamber, unlike the other parts of the house he had seen, was unfurnished; it held nothing more than a low, narrow bed, a tattered blanket, and a few broken bed cords, trailing upon the floor. It was cold and damp, and a chill struck through Puffer as his companion closed the door and shut them in, what seemed to Puffer, from the first moment, a hideous place.

"It's strange you didn't recollect your old nurse," said Mrs. Lettuce, "but never mind that; all your troubles and tribulations began in this room; and I want to tell what your old father's heart failed him to speak of. This was Fyler Close's sleeping-room for more than a year; all the while your poor mother was sick—what snake's eyes that old villain had!—and when he stretched his neck toward that door, when your poor mother was a dying, and spread out his old ugly hands, as if he had 'em hold of her young throat squeezing the life out—but that isn't it. You'll ask what all this means? The long and the short of it is this. Fyler Close and your father loved the same woman; and there wasn't a brighter angel out of heaven than that girl; they both loved her, Paul, but your father married her; and from that day to this, he has had the shadow of the devil, yes the devil himself in the form of that broker, at his heels. Your father, Paul, was always quick, and free, and lavish with his money; and that Fyler Close knew well. He made believe that he didn't care which married the girl, but he hated your father to the death; and as he knew your father's weakness, he worked upon it; he urged him to all sorts of extravagance; to buy this, and buy that, and buy the other—till the tide begun to run back with him—and then Fyler comes in, and like a dear friend, lends him all he wants. He was always of a lending nature, more for spite than gain, I always thought; and so he went on lending till your father wasn't worth a cent he could call his own. Then Fyler began to call it in by degrees, so that your father didn't see what he was driving at; first he had to sell a picture, then an up-stairs carpet; then Fyler came to board in this house, to keep an eye on things. He thought plainer living proper; and the family was put upon a short allowance."

"This is a devil, as you say," said Puffer, from his closed teeth, while the sweat started to his brow. "A devil with two hoofs!"

"By-and-by your mother fell sick—it was the presence of the old broker and a change in her way of living; she grew worse day by day; it was no seated sickness, the doctors said, nothing they could name; she was perishing, I verily believe, of hunger, for every day the table was more spare than before; the broker himself seemed to live on air, to keep it in countenance, and all that time—all the while that poor dear creature was famishing with the pangs of hunger at her heart, which made her cry out, though for his sake—your father's sake, and lest some direr calamity might be brought upon him, she said not a word. But such cries as she uttered, so sharp and awful, I never heard in my life; and Fyler Close lay on that couch, that very couch, drinking them all in like music. The devils must have him, if any man! Your mother was buried."

"Starved to death!" gasped Puffer.

"Even so, I fear," answered Mrs. Lettuce,

"and her grave is just by the house-wall, where the broker could thrust forth his head from this chamber window, and gloat upon it any time he chose. Your father saw her in her grave, but more like one raving mad than a rational creature; immediately after the funeral he disappeared, was gone—no one knows whither to this day, though it is said he lived during that time upon the roads and highways of the country, and sheltered himself in sheds and barns. The old broker lodged here a few nights, grew disquieted it is thought, and went into the city. Paul, Paul," said Hetty, breaking into tears, "I never thought when you were a month's infant on my lap, that I should live to tell you a tale like this. You didn't remember me, but I forgive you."

Puffer stood gazing upon the bed with a blanched face, and glassy eye, and rigid in every limb. Hetty would not let him dwell upon it longer, but, taking him by the arm, led him gently back. So pale and unearthly was his look and action when he came forth, they all gathered about and asked what sudden sickness shook him so?

"Nothing, nothing," he answered. Before they could put further question, Hobbleshank entreated them to pardon him for a while, and drew Puffer away. They went into the open air, and treading gently on the earth, as though a grave lay under every step, they stood beside a tomb built close under the wall. It heaved above the earth, and Hobbleshank, laying his hand upon its top, said to Puffer, "This is your mother's grave." The swelling vines, crested with pure white blossoms, broke like a green wave over its marbled top.

As they recrossed the threshold the trouble passed away from heaven, and the pale, clear light lay on all the country round.

Hobbleshank led Puffer again into the little chamber.

"I have a favor to ask of my child," he said, "but one that he will not fail to grant—I am sure, am I?"

To be sure he was, let him ask anything he chose.

"I want you," said Hobbleshank, "to fix

this breastpin in your bosom and get married to-night."

To-night! Puffer hadn't thought of such a thing. Twenty-five years to come would be time enough. The young lady was in the other room—the parson at hand—how could it be avoided—he'd like to know from Puffer how it was to be avoided? Puffer could suggest no practicable means of escape, and proceeded with the old man to the other room, to be married with as good a grace as he could. The little parson had come; there was the bride, too, whose consent had scarcely been asked, in her snow-white dress, the smart old aunt smoothing the folds and rubbing her hands alternately. In half an hour a change had come over the aspect of Puffer's sky as great as the eclipse without—brightening, not darkening, all that lay beneath. Who can tell what gossip the old farm-house rung with that night—what plans, what jests were broached—what good cheer went abroad among them all? How Halsey Fishblatt declaimed—how the little old aunt chattered—how Hobbleshank shambled up and down the room in a constant glow—how it was finally determined that Hetty Lettuce and Dorothy and Aunt Gatty should come to live in the old farm-house (there was a chirping house full), with Hobbleshank and Paul and the new wife. How Mr. Halsey Fishblatt would strike out some grand scheme or other, by which they should hear and know all that the city did, or thought, or said; how Mr. Sammy Sammis and the little old aunt would come out and visit them, twice a week at least, in a new one-horse to be immediately established; and the poor stranger, too, Puffer's early friend—there was a pleasant berth to be thought of for him—a nice little office Mr. Sammy Sammis had pitched upon in his own mind already, and about which he would see seventeen influential gentlemen to-morrow.

A blessing upon the old household and the young—having spun out a long sorrow as the staple of their life, they have come upon a clear white thread, which will brighten on in happiness and mirth to the very grave's edge!

M I S C E L L A N I E S.



## MISCELLANIES.

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### TRUE AIMS OF LIFE:

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

ALUMNI OF THE NEW YORK UNIVERSITY,

*In the University Chapel, July 16, 1839.*

GENTLEMEN, BRETHREN OF THE ALUMNI:—

THE occasion which has called us together to-day constitutes a fortunate pause in our career. Near enough to the period when we left these halls, to mingle in the cares and conflicts of the world, and far enough onward in the active march of life, it justifies us in looking back thoughtfully to the past and in considering what the great future may have in store for us.

Youth, at least, the first freshness and glory of youth, are gone from us for ever. The gate of that happy paradise, whose clouds were but the ornaments of its morning heaven, and whose sorrow only deepened joy, is closed to our steps. Threatening and inexorable aspects warn us from it, and we must henceforth seek, in a wide and troubled world, such substitutes of happiness as it may furnish. But the mind—the unconquerable and adventurous memory—breaks every fetter, and, hurrying back, leaps that old garden wall, and introduces us for a little hour to scenes, hopes, and pleasures, that we thought were gone never more to return. Who would not give all that he is and all that he has to recover his youth, with its buoyant heart, its cheerful dreams, its sense of wonder, its full-bosomed and innocent delights?

But the future brightens in the distance, and toward it we are impelled by the progressive spirit that belongs to our race. What we have been is chronicled in the great calendar of God. What we are yet to be lies, in a considerable measure, in the palms of our own hands, and will be moulded to honor or to dishonor, as truth and wisdom, or madness and error, teach us by the way. What, then, are the true aims of life? Many so far misapprehend the objects of existence, as to suppose they are fulfilling all the duty of life if they pursue some particular

and chosen career with honest and honorable success. It is a low and cheap estimate of our nature that regards men as mere merchants, soldiers, and artisans. These are the accidents and contingencies of our common life. No man acquires dignity, in the eye of a sagacious and comprehensive philosophy, by filling any or all of these stations with the utmost worldly success. It is not as the followers of business, war, and commerce, that men are venerable and noble beings. It is the condition of his destiny that he should labor; but it is to improve and exalt his intelligence, to broaden the foundations of his intellectual and spiritual nature, that he lives. It is the motion and impulses of a soul that compasses earth and time and transcends physical limits, that make him the image of the great Mover of the heavens. These considerations should teach him to reverence his nature; to bow down to his higher and better qualities with respect; and to cultivate his mind and affections because their development and cultivation is the noblest task in which he can be engaged. By too many the intellect is regarded as a means, a mere auxiliary and mercenary, enlisted in the achievement of secondary and common objects.

Instead of regarding and reverencing the mind as essentially constituting the man, as something in itself and by itself, without reference to its available uses in life, it is held by many as a lesser servant or menial, in the large household of human nature, and ranked only with the hand that hews, and the shoulder that bears base burdens and drudges for the abject and physical wants of man. The mind, this human mind of ours, if rightly understood, is a nobler subject of contemplation than temples and pyramids—has in itself more durable greatness and beauty than mountains and the most glorious carved monuments fashioned by the cunning of human skill.

Objects and pursuits which we regard in themselves as final aims, intrinsically full of worth and moment, are furnished merely as incitements and means toward the development of our higher nature. Many results which we gaze on as prodigies of human ingenuity, are the mere outbreak and transitory expression of this divine fire smouldering within.

To accomplish the true aims of life we must first know what our nature is and what it requires.

Our nature, then, is not a simple element, like the air, the ocean, or the wind, having a single agency to perform, performing it always in one way and through an established round or channel of action. It is a compound and composite condition—a rude, misshapen, unformed chaos of moral, intellectual, and physical ingredients, placed in our keeping to be wrought, by a steady will and enlightened industry, into symmetry and beauty. To show the vast reach, the towering strength and altitude of our nature, and its capacity of extension, we know that it has been the laborious duty of a long life in some men, to single out some separate quality and devote night and day to its mature and perfect development. Constantly heaping together material from every corner of the visible universe, and piling thought on thought, until the broad earth seemed to be its base and the heavens were pierced by its rising summit, we have seen the majestic fabric of some great genius ascend, and just as the structure was assuming breadth and proportion, the earth has opened and swallowed the mighty architect with all his plans. Think you that sublime labor was lost? No. He who here toiled at the foundations in our midst will there be engaged in completing the glorious structure of his nature, and will work cheerfully at its architrave and crowning capital in the eye of his great Taskmaster.

In the whole range of animated beings there is, I imagine, no creature in all respects like man; none in the wide circuit of planets and universes, possessing the same powers, placed amid the same circumstances, and accomplishing the purposes of his being through the same hopes, fears, trials, joys; under a similar sky, and impelled by spiritual and physical influences of like potency and character.

It is our duty to unfold this vast, complex, and peculiar nature, by availing ourselves of every aid within our reach; and aids are not wanting. Not a star, a stream, a shadow—that does not co-operate with us in this great ministry. Every mute thing in nature has a voice to summon forth some faculty of ours and to cherish it in its growth. The grandeur of the heavens kindles our imagination, the stubborn mountain-ascend evokes the resolute will, the ocean-flood challenges our daring, and the decaying blossoms of earth persuade us to weep. I do not deny that many objects are of temporary use and pass utterly away without any deep and durable impressions on our character; but I do believe, that in his infinite wisdom and skill the great Builder has created this world of ours and all that is in it, for this high purpose; has devised it as the best school for human nature, and in his mature and eternal counsels has chosen it out of innumerable plans, as the best suited for the composite and wonderful being whose inheritance it is.

It is not in the material creation alone that our nature finds aliment for its highest qualities. The human world, the wide and restless generation of our own kind, furnishes ample means and inducements. We are so constituted as to have our best faculties, our broadest enterprises, our noblest emotions, elicited by the quick sympathies of our common race. We are generous, heroic, fearless in trial, and with countenances glowing from within as well as from without, amid the fires of martyrdom, that we may acquire the affections and praises of mankind. We build our loftiest and most durable monuments that we may live in the memory of man. We give up household quiet, domestic joy, serene contemplation, life itself, and wrestle in the stormy conflict for a sudden and glorious grave, to which men may come and give their tears. We should therefore preserve a pure and comprehensive sympathy for our race, as one of the most precious and persuasive instruments in accomplishing the true ends of our existence. Let man, the living, actual man, as he moves before us and around us, be our perpetual study and one of the constant and worthy objects of our regard. Let us also bring ourselves in daily communion with the generations that are past and distant. And how can this be attained?

Fortunately we are not bound, like lower natures, to that only which is present and immediate. Our lives are not hedged in by a little round of visible and present objects; we can grasp the remote, the future, the past—that which is above and beneath us, and far off beyond the range of sense. It is by literature that we thus enlarge and elevate our vision; and in no wise plan of life will literature be forgotten. The recorded thoughts of men of genius will teach us to what sublime heights the human soul may be borne in moments of rapture and inspiration; how cheerful our human nature may show itself in its hour of genial and jovial enjoyment, and what a divinity of sorrow it may express in its noblest periods of pure and gentle emotion. Here we may see great souls wrung and touched and wrapt away in the glorious agony of deep feeling and mighty thought, snatched from our common life and hurried from our mortal view, but casting back a prophet's mantle of many deathless hues upon the earth. From these precious legacies, left to our race by its richest benefactors, we may learn what human nature has been, what it is, and what it should be. In them we shall discover pictures to startle, to bless, to cheer, and kindle our nature. From them, as from a great fountain, every faculty may draw that which it thirsts for, and may there be purified and strengthened.

In all moods of the soul, in every access of sorrow, depression, and pain; in the tumult of ambition and in the silent nook of contemplative life, some voice, measured to the purpose, will speak to us from some good and precious page. A liberal devotion to literature is, per-

haps, of all human means, best calculated to expand and exalt our character, and to preserve its great primary elements from being undermined and swept away in the treacherous and noisy currents of the world.

One important lesson to be derived from books I should not omit. They teach us by their general temper and spirit to regard every object with interest, and to feel that nothing about us is beneath our attention or can not contribute to rational enjoyment. By that magic which belongs to genius alone, a charm has been imparted to a thousand objects which in themselves are barren, trivial, and unprofitable; so that what in nature has been left unfinished or unfurnished by the Creator himself, has been supplied by the creative and liberal hand of gifted men. Literature has thus lent a glory to nature herself, and has peopled her void and desert places with her own cheerful and happy progeny. Could we keep our souls open to the pure impulses awakened by genius and nature how happy would be this brief life of ours! Could we retain the childish wonder and sensibility of youth, and acquire the maturity of manhood together, how smoothly and wisely would our days go by! This can not be. The boy is alive to every impulse from within and from without; no cloud passes through the sky without its influence on his susceptible temper; no spectacle of nature or art that does not awaken a certain magic sense of wonder and delight. The man hardens; his mind becomes rigid, like his body, and all these influences fall upon him unheeded or with faint effect. It is only men born with a peculiar tenderness and beauty of character, who continue through manhood and age plastic to the various agencies under which they pass. To preserve something of the boy, or at least the boy's feelings in our haughty and proud manhood, and in our calculating and selfish age, is given to but few of us. This is one of the noblest arts of life; to keep the soul open to the power of what is great in nature, sublime in humanity, lovely in beauty, or gentle in feeling.

To most of us this happy susceptibility of nature soon passes away for ever, but, praised be Heaven, there is a race of men whose duty and privilege it is to bear on high the sacred torch, and lend a new light to mankind by which everything shall gain back a portion of the freshness and lustre it possessed in our youth.

" Blessings be with them and eternal praise,  
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,  
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays."

It is the prerogative of inspired natures to present old objects to our minds as if they were new; to make us see more in stars, streams, mountains, than mere material objects, and to link one majestic or lovely thing with another bringing together the remotest and placing them side by side to illustrate each other and thus multiply nature itself. Thus, by a high effort

of intellect are the colors, bestowed on nature, by youth, restored; and thus as we advance in life, does the creation in the midst of which we dwell, unfold new elements of happiness and new materials on which our larger faculties may labor.

As far as it lies within us, and within the reach of our endeavor, we should strive to make this fortunate temper—the most fortunate that can belong to man—our own. Let us shut out petty cares, low passions, and unworthy desires, and in the silence of a pure breast, this kindly visitor may, perhaps, enter in and bless us, and ere it depart, it may, like the magician of the eastern story, anoint our eyes so that we shall thenceforth behold nothing but splendor and beauty through the earth. To live is nothing; but to possess a great soul, an exalted spirit of duty and affection, a noble, cultivated, and susceptible nature, is an honor and distinction in any man.

No system of philosophy or morals, it seems to me, is sound and genuine which conflicts with this liberal cultivation of the powers; which depresses some and allows others to start into bold and prominent relief. The general harmony of character must be preserved or the great commonwealth of human faculties falls into terrible and disastrous confusion; those which have been degraded and disfranchised finding cruel avengers in such as have acquired a fearful and irregular ascendancy.

Many, if not all, of the gloomy troubles on which history feeds, have had their source in this dictatorship of single and unchecked passions or propensities.

Sometimes, imagination obtaining the entire mastery, the steadfast world has, as it were been swept from its moorings and rolled about on a wide sea of speculation, vainly searching for some unattainable shore of adventure, now pressing for the holy sepulchre in the east, and now drifting madly toward the western El Dorado.

Again, where the strict judgment, the purely moral powers of man have held the supremacy, unmatened with the gentler sentiments and unrestrained by the enlightened intellect, we have had persecution, martyrdom, baleful fires, and bloodshed. And when, on the other hand, the intellectual nature has attempted this solitary authority, disdaining counsel from the heart and silencing the great voice of duty, mankind have lost themselves in the frivolous discussion of schoolmen and the pigmy literature of Della Cruscan authors.

In connexion with this broad and ample development of our powers, another important duty resting upon us all, is to select, as far as in us lies, our own position in life; nay, I would almost say, the very place and climate where we shall live. Possessing a nature so complicated and so finely sensitive to all influences, whether from within or from without, man should render the same justice and grant the same privileges to his own nature as he be-



stows on other objects of his care. For his garden he chooses an upland, of a healthy soil, a pleasant exposure to the sun, and a spot where the gentle showers of summer may fall not unblest. His watch-towers and observatories he plants upon an eminence, looking forth on a wide region of hill and valley, and summoning by their majestic altitude, all earth and heaven into the range of their vision. Shall he deal less wisely and justly by his own nature than by these? Shall he not choose for himself a station in life, a condition of circumstances, a range of outward objects which shall exercise the happiest authority over the nice organs of sense, and the delicate elements of character? A man may be said to be the result of all that he has known, seen, heard, and felt. It is of high importance, then, that he should see, know, feel, and hear, that which will exert the most refined and exalted influence over his mind, passions, and affections. We are bound by our nature to no one condition of action; there is not one business, one pursuit, and one happiness provided for all men. Humanity is given to each of us to make of it what we can! Lofty natures require lofty incitements to action. The ear that is deaf to the soothing music of the dulcimer may be stirred by the roll of the drum, or the clangor of the trumpet. The sky may be the holiest spectacle to one, and the fair earth awaken the dearest solicitude of the other. To every man there is a class of objects, associations, sights and sounds, that speak to him with peculiar force and agency.

Hard and stern realities are the best nurse of some natures, while others grow and expand in an atmosphere filled with the soft radiance of poetic light, and peopled by fancy with innumerable images of splendor and renown. One pursues fame, and in fame finds his best reward and true felicity—all his powers brought into action, his whole being aroused—the audience and occasion such as suit the temper of the man. Another in some secluded nook passes his days happy in peaceful labors and slumbers unbroken by dream, vision, or hope. One character shows to best advantage in the broad blaze of noon; another, in the milder splendor of morning; and a third, in a glimmering twilight, half way between fame and obscurity.

There are great influences, too, of city and of country which sweep over large masses of men. In a mighty metropolis a man's nature is fed and excited from a thousand sources. It is stimulated to action by the loud roar of the multitude; it is kindled into enthusiasm by the daily sight of a thousand faces; an inquisition is fixed upon it from a thousand eyes. Bad passions can not go long here without a prompter; nor benevolent purposes long without an object. He stands amid the clash of a Babel, and a perpetual tumult is stirred within his breast in which new and newly compounded motives of action are daily springing up. Noth-

ing is done simply as if he stood alone in the view of Heaven. Then, with an observant eye, what crowds of strange and curious images are engendered in the brain by this swift and varied phantasmagoria of life! Transitions from fortune to famine; great men toppled down from their elevation, and little men raised on a pedestal as if they were gods. Here he can laugh at one moment and weep at the next. In the train of sunbright fashion and beauty, dark sorrow walks as a mourner, and every man's shadow is but a gloomy monitor of distress. The picture of life is made up of startling contrasts; gloom of more than midnight darkness—joy of more than meridian splendor. Here ambition stalks forth and assumes a kingly post, and the next moment occupies a coffin. This is a wonderful school of human nature, but is it alone the wisest and best? I think not; but if it be, and our duty assign us a station here, let us not forget the cheerful regions that lie beyond. From the noise and madness, let the wise man steal forth at times to other scenes where nature sits alone, and where he may learn some lessons from her unpurchased and incorruptible voice.

Among the healthiest influences that can be brought to bear upon his nature, let him visit the green fields often! No unwise thought—no dark passion rises from the pure bosom of the earth. There he will have happy meditations, prosperous periods of thought, and, if his childhood have been familiar with the scene, thronging recollections that will swell his heart and overflow at his eyes in tears of passionate delight. Let him see the green fields often! for there he will walk with angelic quiet, serene contemplation, and when he returns, if return he must, to the crowded and raging city, these sweet companions will champion him back, and crossing, perchance, the noisy bounds will be content to dwell with him awhile and cheer his heart in the intervals and calm hours of strife and gain. Let him visit the green fields often! there he will renew his youth and acquire a fresh and cheerful spirit that shall be better to him in his old age than rank, wealth, or worldly honor.

Let other influences be sought and cherished as they adapt themselves to the requirements of each man's nature. If the ocean move him with a special power, let him visit the ocean and feel its greatness. Let his mind heave and expand with the heaving mountain wave, stretching far onward into the dark distance and the darker future. If the thunder of the cataract utter a more audible voice to him, let him stand by its side while his nature wrestles and grows strong in the embrace of the great God of waters. Or if, on the other hand, in the thronged assemblies of men his soul is more deeply moved, and the inspiration of high purposes breathed more fully upon him, let him seek their companionship and school himself amid the multitudinous tumult. These are higher and worthier objects than fortune, con-

quest, victory in great battles, or triumph in the loud senate of nations.

Another great consideration I would urge as an important aid in attaining the true aims of life: namely a devout and generous love of our native land. A sincere and earnest attachment to the land of our birth, is calculated to awaken the whole soul into healthy action; to appeal to us by a thousand silent sympathies, and by casting a charm around the scene in which we dwell, impart to our nature a genial excitement under which its best powers are exerted. To love our country is to love life, and to strive to make that life happy by lending a romantic interest to the spot in which it is cast. Our country, if we truly love it, evokes our feelings, our judgment, our imagination, and solicits these, by an unseen persuasion, to employ themselves in adorning and exalting the object of their regard, and in contributing to its well-being with all the strength and capacity they possess. Where that country is a sublime and noble one, and her external aspect grand and lovely, we should endeavor to make ourselves worthy of it, and to show that the human spirit can be no less great and generous than the outward objects with which it copes. Who has not felt, at some period or other of his life, an ardent wish, a burning desire, to link himself in some way or other, with the destinies of his country, to live in his land's language, and to leave some memorial behind him in which his country should have a claim? Who knows not some little spot, some humble stream, which is nearer to his heart because it belongs to the land of his birth, the bower of his boyhood, the shelter and solace of his declining years?

By some, patriotism, or love of country, is regarded as an airy bubble, raised by cunning statesmen to dazzle and bewilder the multitude. They speak of it as if there were in reality no such thing as a genuine and honest attachment to one's country. Is there, then, no solid foundation in the constitution of our nature on which to build such an affection? Are there no claims that plead in the heart for such a love? Here we first saw the morning light; here we drank in the first breath of the pure air. From its bosom we first beheld the glad spectacles which cheer and illumine our life. The first rainbow that we ever looked on spanned our native land; the first sunset, whose splendors made our young hearts dance with joy, was kindled on the horizon of our country. It is here that we have first known spring-time and autumn, and the genial round of seasons. Here we saw the first odorous flower; and here we first beheld the distant hill-tops and the broad green wood tinged with the glory of the sun. From this chosen scene of our existence we first looked abroad on the starry miracle of a sustained and balanced universe. Here dawned upon our minds our earliest conceptions of duty, justice, kindred, and fellowship with man.

Here we first felt the warm embrace of a mother's love and the first pressure of a friendly hand. It is here we have shed our first tears, and felt all the tender emotions that spring up over the grave of those we have loved. Here, in a word, we first had life; and here, in the dispensations of sovereign power, we shall lay it down. Should not the spot of all these gentle and affecting associations be dear to us? Should it be as common earth? We do no wrong to our nature by a devout and earnest love of the land in which we live, but rather render it an acceptable service and aid its powers in their development by all the impulses of hope, reason, and affection, that grow from such a love.

Another important and genuine aim of life is to regulate the action of our own mind and character on the mind and character of others. The influence of man on man can not be measured. Human nature is so full of startling echoes and reflections, that a voice can scarcely be raised or a light held up in any corner of the earth without creating everywhere a thousand responses, and returning the original image in innumerable colors of surprise, indignation, horror, and joy. In a narrower circle mind acts upon mind with fearful force. Lured on by the mutual voice of man, human beings have reached their highest fortune or have been plunged into utter and abject misery. Sustained by the generous homage of a few wise and steadfast friends, one of the great masters of our age has toiled for half a century and is now hailed a poet by the general acclaim of the world. By human sympathy and influence great enterprises are pushed to a successful issue; purposes that lurked in the breast have been matured into large and prosperous results; conjecture has ripened into discovery, faith swelled to martyrdom, and out of our common and vulgar clay an almost angelic creature been fashioned. So vast are the operations of human sympathy, that pure natures, by its perversion, may be brought down to degradation and shame, and fiendish ones, by its higher influence, be elevated to beauty and honor.

There are auspicious moments when the soul lies open, by some natural and imperceptible movements of its springs, when lofty thoughts and happy visions glide serenely into the mind, and when we are gently disposed to receive sweet influences and grant them a residence in the breast. It may be in the red twilight of summer, that the heavenly visitant is disclosed; it descends, perchance, in the soothing August shower, or may flow upon us with the invisible wind that stirs the green blades of the meadow with life. These are the golden moments when the influence of man on man is most deeply and happily felt. We all have these, nor should we let them pass in ourselves or in others, without profit. It is these moments of natural revelation, if I may so call them, that can give the brightest and truest colors to our lives. If we could always be what we are under the momen-

tary inspiration of these divine awakenings, old Eden would be restored and man would walk again with his Maker without fear and without reproach. Let no such moment—for but a few such are granted to us—pass by unheeded or unimproved. Then is the chosen hour to enter the bosom of our fellow-man and leave there some durable impress of goodness, beauty, and truth. It is the peculiar privilege of genius and eloquence to create a condition of mind, in many respects, kindred to this, and to win their way to the heart and there plant the everlasting seeds of truth in a soil thus desolately prepared for their welcome.

Contemporary and co-ordinate with this, is the duty to sustain great truths, and the discountenanced advocates of great truths, in the midst of doubt, opposition, and calumny. Into the hands of a few chosen spirits falls, oftentimes, the custody of principles vital to the best interests of mankind. Scorned, slandered, ridiculed, it is their generous labor to hold up the banner of some outcast truth, and carry it forward amid the clamors of an ignorant and passionate multitude. A few fearless and high-souled men in every generation act the part of posterity to pure and lofty opinion, and anticipate in themselves and by their own sagacious hardihood, the verdict of that impartial tribunal. Wherever, then, we see a vital truth delivered, a noble creation of genius, a suppressed but struggling thought that belongs to mankind, let us bring it forth to the light, give it our countenance and support, and fix it on an eminence where the world can not but behold it, and in the end fall down in worship of its excellence and grandeur.

Common opinions, of use to the daily interests of men, will find friends and patronage in every street and marketplace; but new, vast, and sublime creations, unfamiliar to the vulgar mind, and startling to the trained criticism and judgment of the day, require that such as are capable of comprehending them, should form themselves into a resolute guard, and, by union, firmness, and a high tone of manly and vigorous daring, urge them on the attention of the world. No great truth, no sublime creation, can utterly perish; but the hour of its triumph may be held back, and a thousand hearts be buried in the earth, that would have been thrilled, refined, and exalted, by the glorious vision, had it come earlier to greet their eyes.

How blessed a consolation would it be to us in old age—yea, even in an old age of poverty, sorrow, and obscurity—that we have seen in silence no good man trampled on, no great principle crushed, which we might have saved from such dishonor; have fled from the advocacy of no friend because he was poor; have sought the shelter of no unrighteous error because it was strong, and might beat off the dark shower of malice, oppression, or popular madness; have not fawned on brutal or vulgar pomp; and can close our eyes on a world which has

had in us no example of time-serving, cunning cowardice, or a prudent and considerate love of self and selfish ends. Not to have soothed the anguish of some broken spirit; not to have resisted unjust aggression; to have refrained from upholding the truth through fear, favor, or hope of reward; to have allowed insolent magistracy to pervert or dally with the right, or furious multitudes to invade public sanctuaries or private homes; to have shrunk back from stretching a hand to an overwhelming and sinking fellow-being because he has sinned; to have frowned down one honest smile in a poor man's face, or to have wrung one tear from a desolate woman's eye; these will be gloomy attendants about a death-bed; a horrible retinue to herald us into a perilous and fearful hereafter; these, these it is that make the grave dark and terrible!

Finally, if we adopt this broad and liberal plan of cultivating our powers and affections, by every faculty developed, we shall expand the circle of our enjoyments, the grasp of our minds, and the true manliness of our characters. Where before we crept along impaired of the very limbs that should aid our motions, we now assume an erect and vigorous gait, and an eye that smiles on the varied scenes and truths of life with an intelligent joy. We thus provide for ourselves a wide range of objects on which to lavish our justice, affection, our observation and fancy, our whole passionate and thoughtful nature. Embracing thus many topics, and enlarging our minds to the comprehension of a wide range of duty and affection, we will become endowed with a more just judgment, a keener insight into right and wrong, and a general capacity for action and meditation unknown to us before. Many things which seemed distasteful and repulsive to our narrow vision, will now start up into significance and beauty under the authority of some newly developed sense of enjoyment. All life will then be full of meaning. The sad, the humorous, the imaginative, will need no interpreter but the faculty furnished by nature, to apprehend them. From no phase of human nature, no condition of men, can we then turn away our eyes without injustice to the great law written in the soul. We will glow at the thought of heroic daring; weep over the sorrows that afflict gentle natures, and smile at the grotesque and comic exhibitions of humanity in the ordinary walks of life. We can then sit with the philosopher in his cell, and feel a kindred rapture in the contemplation of the starry vastness and majesty of the heavens, and with him weigh out the glories and planetary masses of infinite space. Amid the mountains we will wander with the poet, and listening to the roar of distant waters, have the divine particle, the blessed imagination, stirred with a deep fervor with in us. With the humbler moralist and the shrewd observer of life, we will take our position in the thoroughfare and catch, with a pleased eye, the strange humors, the cunning

dealings and actions of common men. Sky, ocean, human faces, human thoughts, the fortunes of rich and poor, God's anger in the storm and earthquake, man's lesser rage in battle and revenge, ambition, love, the finer and coarser passions of the soul, our destiny here and hereafter, will pass under the cognizance of this organized and balanced intellect, and each will have its due place accorded to it. All objects, in such a mind, will attain their just position, have their peculiar influence, and be permitted to co-operate together in building up that noblest of earthly existences, a human soul. An exquisite harmony will pervade our life and character. Every passion will enjoy its due growth and enlargement; every faculty move in conjunction with its kindred powers, and none in this well-ordered assemblage, will venture to usurp an unnatural and unwise supremacy. The human spirit will then stoop under no despotism, whether of lawless imagination, harsh reason, or benighted conscience. The world will not then assume to the eye a level and repulsive smoothness, clothed in a single and sombre hue, but will be disclosed in varied shapes, hills, valleys, ample plains, and be tinged with a thousand happy and cheerful colors. Our life will not be single but a hundred fold; every object will have many true and just interpretations, which shall gather around it like rays, and constitute the brightness and effulgence of truth whose whole countenance we shall then behold, as far as men may behold it, turned with a full gaze upon our own. Under this many-colored standard we shall pursue the triumphant march of life, while melodious sounds of many measures cheer us on.

We shall then know how joyous a place is this world of ours; how many sweet objects it bears when rightly regarded. We shall then repent that we have ever uttered one harsh word against it, and shall weep to leave it with its varied blessings behind. It will be a hard thing, after all, to leave this pleasant chamber of the earth in which we have dwelt so long. It will be something to give up the bright sky, and the green woods, and the blue waters, to go and dwell with the worm. Our old familiar friends, the forest, the mountain, and the stream, must henceforth know us no more. The silent shadow of the tree, the sweet voice of the bird, and the glowing sunset, must no longer look upon us, nor make music for our ear, nor a cool shadow for our feet. We must yield up the true friend and forget and forego his embrace. The smile, the trust, and the tender caress of woman must never more be our portion or our solace. It is true we are to be apparelled in glory and to put on the garments of angels; but what can recompense us, what height of glory, what rapture of bliss, for those purely human joys which made a part of our lot on earth? We would, if so permitted, bear something of our mortality with us even to the gate of heaven, and add it as a worthy ingre-

dient to the nobler elements of celestial happiness. We are now, as it were, in the vestibule and outer court of nature; before and above us the solemn temple, the vast cathedral of the universe, towers and broadens into immeasurable extent. Ere we are admitted let us prepare our hearts for this mighty habitation; let us lift up our imaginations, purged of earthly grossness, to the height and sanctity of that great structure; so that when we enter in, our feeble and guilty spirits may not tremble at its vastness, nor shrink back from its holy and enduring grandeur!

## NEW ETHICS OF EATING.\*

[*New York Review*, Oct., 1837.]

THE world is peopled by two classes of beings, which seem to be as cognate and necessary to each other as male and female. Charlatans and dupes exist by a mutual dependance. There is a tacit understanding, that whatever the one invents the other must believe. All bills which the former draws, the latter comes forward at once and honors. One is Prospero, the other his poor slave Caliban. The charlatan tricks himself out in a mask, assumes a deep, hollow voice, and struts upon the stage; while the dupe sits gaping in the pit, and takes every word that drops from the rogue's mouth for gospel truth and genuine philosophy. It would really seem as if the two parties had entered into a solemn compact, that wherever the one exhibits as charlatan, the other, by an absolute necessity, agrees to be present as simpleton. Let the rogue open shop to dispense pills, the simpleton, as soon as he learns the fact, hies to the place of trade, and, pouring down his pence on the counter, takes his box of specifics and walks complacently away. The knaves seem to consider the world as a rich parish—a large diocese of dunces, into which they have an hereditary and prescriptive right to be installed. They are never at rest until they have some subject on which to hold forth in public; some novel doctrine running against the grain of the old good sense; some antiquated sophism dressed in a new suit, to be put forth to surprise and startle the community, and gather around it (as a gay adventurer) an army of disciples. These men constantly assume an attitude of battle. They wage war upon everything past, present, and to come:

"Rather than fail they will decay  
That which they love most tenderly;  
Quarrel with minced pies, and disparage  
Their best and dearest friend plum-porridge;  
Fat pig and goose itself oppose,  
And blaspheme custard through the nose."

\* Dyspepsy Forestalled and Resisted; or Lectures on Diet, Regimen, and Employment; delivered to the students of Amherst College, Spring term, 1830. By Edward Hitchcock, Professor of Chymistry and Natural History in that Institution. Amherst. Published by J. S. & C. Adams, & Co.

General ignorance, with a smattering of medical knowledge; some fluency in speaking, or readiness with the pen; great tact in discovering the disposition, and skill in the management of a certain class of persons; an air of easy, cool impudence in public; an oracular and self-possessed manner in private, are parts of that beautiful mosaic—an apostle of dietetics. Of such materials are framed those little men who attempt upon the earth to rival Deity; who assume his thunder and trident; his power to shake the heart with fear; to regulate the human system; and to denounce penal fires, and all imaginable and unimaginable tortures on the head of rebellion. These are the cunning plotters who work upon weak minds through their fancies and doubts. "They give a life and body to their fears." Such men, broken down in health and dyspeptic, whose whole lives have been a scene of miserable and false feelings, engendered by a morbid condition of body, assume to become prophets and dispensers of health. These ruined and ruinous horologues would give the time o' day to the healthy world.

In every age there has existed some favorite theory for the regeneration of the race; some grand discovery (about to be made), which was to be universal, ubiquitous in its influence and success. At one time the philosopher's stone; in the next age a short passage to the East Indies; and now, in a third and less romantic period, all the great objects of amelioration and amendment are to be accomplished by the substitution of unbolted flour in the place of pure wheat and solid animal food. The authors of these miraculous discoveries believe that the human race is to be regenerated solely through the medium of the palate; that the channels of access to the human head and human heart are not, as of old, through the understanding and the affections, but through the alimentary ducts. Instead of winding along the shore of the Mediterranean and over the shoals of the Indian ocean, they strike boldly across the Atlantic, and find the country for which they are in search. They take for granted that man has no imagination, no heart, no nerves, no soul, nor arteries; but that he is a creature *all stomach*; that one mighty abdomen is the badge and property of human kind; and that in it centres the machinery, from it spring the movements, which build up and overturn states and empires—the strong fancy which moulds itself in epics and histories—the gentle pathos which melts us from the pulpit or in the elegy—the fierce wrath and "energy divine" which shake the stage; all hold their court in this vast subterranean cavern, and from it rush forth upon the world.

The first great canon of this code of living, is, that the flesh of beasts be banished from the table. Unholy pig, nor stupid veal, nor silly mutton, corpulent roast-beef, nor presumptuous sirloin, must appear before these chaste, dietetic vestals. Calf, sheep, ox, fowl, partridge—they know them not in animated nature. They have revised the edible universe,

and from it stricken these blots and monsters. Tender-souled philanthropists! They would know why these should not run rampant, and fly on the earth and in the air harmless? They are joint denizens here; fellow-citizens of ours, are these, good friends!

These natural feeders have "a touch that makes them kin" with us. Let them grow and multiply. Let them fatten in our meadows, and spread their pinions in our woods. Like us, they are for an equitable division of property; they, too, are humble agrarians; their desires are moderate. Till your fields until the sweat pearls upon your forehead; you need not chaffer with customers—they will take the crop of grain off your hands. Gay creatures, they will frisk and eat for you. They have made us their stewards; if we plough and plant, they will, most willingly, gather the increase.

"The hog that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,  
Lives on the labors of this lord of all;  
While man exclaims, 'See all things for my use,'  
'See man for mine!' replies a pampered goose."

Yes, these prodigal Pythagoreans, these vegetable philosophers, would give the earth up to the undisputed possession of Messrs. Ox, Hog, & Company. They would hand the title-deeds over to that firm. It has, perhaps, never entered the heads of these anti-carnivorous gentlemen, these minor omnipotents, who would change mankind into so many Nebuchadnezzars and send the world to eat grass, what disposition they would make of their fourfooted rivals in the event of a general adoption of their principles. We would have to turn back into heathenism, and offer up a hecatomb to each one of the forty thousand gods of antiquity, to reduce the cattle-market within reasonable limits.

"*Man partakes*," says one of the learned doctors of this school, "*of the nature of the animal which he eats!*" Here is a reverse system of metempsychosis. The old doctrine was, that the soul of a philosopher might possess the body of a donkey; but it is an altogether new-fangled thing for the spirit of a Bakewell bull or a Merino to take up its residence in the body of a doctor of divinity, or that of a lecturer on Hygiene. But so it is; and it needs but a little disorder of the nerves to make the imagination teem with frightful consequences of this new faith. Only to think of our rosy-cheeked friend, the Englishman, who feeds on roast-beef, in the excitement of a political argument, suddenly protruding upon us the horns of an ox! Or Madame Beauvais, our vivacious and agreeable French acquaintance, getting animated into one of the frogs she loves so well! Dear old Piscator, too, who delighteth so in fishing and in eating fish, to imagine him jumping from the boat and turning into one of his own favorite striped bass! Forfend us, that we should hook up our bosom-friend, and salt him away for a morrow's breakfast!

But the worst of it is, that these attenuated apostles of bran bread and water-cresses—whose worn-out organs can assimilate no strong

meat, can not be content with feeding their own way (which, if it be best for them, they have our free leave to feed as they list), nor be contented with simply proselyting by example and doctrine men of their own kind, but they insist upon imposing all the pains of moral excommunication upon us who have healthy digestions and cheerful spirits, unless we will follow their examples swear by their names, and feed by their rules.

Men must be lean, ghostlike, sepulchral—who know not flesh at their tables. With them, to be lean is a virtue; to be fat, an abomination. If you fill your garments well, and keep a running account with your butcher, they will have an eye on you—you are not to be altogether trusted. Crimes, in this code, are regulated by pounds *avoidupois*. "*An adherence to animal food*," says Hitchcock, "*is no more than a persistence in the customs of savage life*." We are barbarians, all. Now we put it seriously to the disciples of this creed, whether they can call to mind a well-authenticated case of murder, or any act implying brutality or cruelty of disposition, committed by a corpulent man. A fat murderer would be a monster. The earth could not bear him up. It is true, such a one may be an accomplice in the second or third degree; a rosy landlord, who holds the light, or a stout countryman, employed to watch under a hedge for the approach of the victim. It is a part of our nature, on the other hand, a Draconic law of our blood and being, that we should look upon a lean man with something of suspicion in most cases; in many, with pity and contempt. A corpulent man we may dislike or detest, but in his broad, open countenance, there is something so like candor and honest living, that it would require much to bring us to believe him a villain. In no case may we despise him, or charge him reasonably with a criminal act. It is your starvelings who fill the calendar of the sessions. It is they who commit thefts, burglaries, petit larcenies, and other contemptible small crimes. It is they who are seen running down streets with stray pieces of linen or pairs of pilfered Wellingtons. Who ever heard the cry, "Stop thief!" raised at the heels of a man who weighed two hundred and upward? It would be an anomaly, a practical solecism, to see the hands of a constable or sheriff's officer on the collar of a coat three feet across the shoulders. It is your fat, solid men—men who know the luxury of three full meals—that make good citizens, kind fathers, tender husbands. These men are all fed on beef.

According to the dietetic system, food seems to be apportioned in an inverse ratio to the character and rank of the feeder. Thus, man, the noblest creature of the earth, must fatten on bran bread and spare vegetables; while the horse, we suppose, is to feed on custards, and the right worshipful donkey on blanchmange and ice-cream.

Charles Lamb, in one of his essays, has an

admirable battery of masked irony directed against vegetable feeders. It is a short sketch, supposed to be written by a lady (*Hospita*) describing a gluttonous visitor. "What makes his proceedings more particularly offensive at our house is, that my husband, though out of common politeness he is obliged to set dishes of animal food before his visitors, yet himself and his whole family (myself included) feed entirely on vegetables. We have a theory that animal food is neither wholesome nor natural to man; and even vegetables we refuse to eat until they have undergone the operation of fire, in consideration of those numberless little living creatures which the glass helps us to detect in every fibre of the plant or root before it be dressed. On the same theory we boil our water, which is our only drink, before we suffer it to come to table. Our children are perfect little Pythagoreans; it would do you good to see them in their nursery, stuffing their dried fruits, figs, raisins, and milk, which is the only approach to animal food which is allowed. They have no notion how the substance of a creature that ever had life can become food for another creature. A beef-steak is an absurdity to them; a mutton-chop, a solecism in terms; a cutlet, a word absolutely without any meaning; a butcher is nonsense, except so far as it is taken for a man who delights in blood, or a hero. In this happy state of innocence we have kept their minds, not allowing them to go into the kitchen, or to hear of any preparations for dressing of animal food, or even to know that such things are practised. But, as a state of ignorance is incompatible with a certain age; and as my eldest girl, who is ten years old next midsummer, must shortly be introduced into the world and sit at table with us, where she will see some things which will shock all her received notions, I have been endeavoring, by little and little, to break her mind, and prepare it for the disagreeable impressions which must be forced upon it. The first hint I gave her upon the subject, I could see her recoil from it with the same horror with which we listen to a tale of Anthropophagism; but she has gradually grown more reconciled to it, in some measure, from my telling her that it was the custom of the world—to which, however senseless, we must submit, so far as we could do it with innocence, not to give offence; and she has shown so much strength of mind on other occasions, which I have no doubt is owing to the calmness and serenity superinduced by her diet, that I am in good hopes that when the proper season of her *debut* arrives, she may be brought to endure the sight of a roasted chicken or a dish of sweetbreads, for the first time, without fainting."

We think one of the rarest spectacles in the world must be, what is called, a *Graham* boardinghouse, at about the dinner-hour. Along a table, from which, perhaps, the too-elegant and gorgeous luxury of a cloth is discarded (for we have never enjoyed the felicity of an actual



vision of this kind), seated some thirty lean-visaged, cadaverous disciples, eying each other askance, their looks lit up with a certain cannibal spirit, which, if there were any chance of making a full meal off each other's bones, might perhaps break into dangerous practice. The gentlemen resemble busts cut in chalk or white flint; the lady-boarders (they will pardon the allusion), mummies, preserved in saffron. At the left hand of each stands a small tankard or pint-tumbler of cold water, or, perchance, a decoction of hot water with a little milk and sugar—as Professor Hitchcock justly styles it—“A harmless and salutary beverage;” at the right, a thin segment of bran bread. Stretched on a plate in the centre lie, melancholy twins! a pair of starveling mackerel, flanked on either side by three or four straggling radishes, and kept in countenance by a sorry bunch of asparagus, served up without sauce. The van of the table is led by a hollow dish, with a dozen potatoes, rather, corpses of potatoes, in a row, lying at the bottom.

At those tables look for no conversation, or for conversation of the driest and dullest sort. Small wit is begotten of spare viands. They, however, think otherwise. “*Vegetable food*,” says the sagacious Hitchcock, “*tends to preserve a delicacy of feeling, a liveliness of imagination, and acuteness of judgment, seldom enjoyed by those who live principally on meat.*” Green peas, cabbage, and spinach, are enrolled in a new catalogue. They are no longer culinary and botanical—they take rank above that. They are become metaphysical, and have a rare operation that way; they “tend to preserve a delicacy of feeling,” &c. Cauliflower is a power of the mind; and asparagus, done tenderly, is nothing less than a mental faculty of the first order. “Buttered parsnips” are, no doubt, a great help in education; and a course of vegetables, we presume, is to be substituted at college in the place of the old routine of Greek and Latin classics. The student will be henceforth pushed forward through his academic studies by rapid stages of Lima beans, parsley, and tomato. Very good—we like your novelties in education. Nothing could certainly be more original, or more happily thought of, than a diet of greens for freshmen and sophomores, and, you must have something expansive and brilliant there, a regimen of sunflowers and pumpkin for the elder classes. We like this vastly. This is metempsychosis again. The “soul of Socrates might take up its residence in a stocking weaver,” as the doctrine used to stand; but now, better still, a man may go out into the fields and cull just such a soul as he chooses, in the same way as you select a coat in a tailor’s shop, or a glove at the hosier’s. He has a free range of faculties to draw upon. If he finds his sympathies begin to flag from too much use, or to soil from contact with the rude world, let him but step into his garden and gather a few of those vegetables “which tend to preserve a delicacy of feeling.” We have

here, also, a new specific for the composition of Shaksperes, Miltons, and Byrons. Poets are now to be turned into the meadow, and prepared for the production of a tragedy or epic, just as you fat a prize-ox or a piece of mutton. Such feeding tends to preserve a “liveliness of imagination.” Statesmen and lawyers, who require “acuteness of judgment,” will henceforward graduate on potherbs from the kitchen-garden. Sir Walter Scott must have been altogether at fault in the opinion expressed in the autobiographical fragment prefixed to the Life. “After one or two relapses,” says he, speaking of an illness he had suffered from, “my constitution recovered the injury it had sustained, though for several months afterward I was restricted to a severe vegetable diet. And I must say, in passing, that though I gained health under this necessary restriction, yet it was far from being agreeable to me; and *I was afflicted, while under its influence, with a nervousness which I never felt before nor since.* A disposition to start upon slight alarms—a want of decision in feeling and acting, which has not usually been my failing—an acute sensibility to trifling inconveniences—and an unnecessary apprehension of contingent misfortunes, rise to memory as connected with my vegetable diet, although they may very possibly have been entirely the result of the disorder and not of the cure.” It is clear, however, which way he leaned, although he speaks in the most guarded language. It will be observed, that he attributed to vegetable diet a peculiar malady, for which the dietetic professors assert it is a most admirable specific.

The most lamentable aspect of the system and teachings of these apostles of improved dietetics is that which regards its moral character and influence. Not content with a total revolution of the whole world by the aid of abstinence and fasting, they would turn the same engines toward heaven, and with them impiously, perhaps ignorantly impious, batter down the established monuments of gospel, morals, and truth. Not satisfied with the operations of their specific on mind and body, they would incorporate their wild fantasies in the moral code, and place the dogma of an itinerant lecturer at the head of the commandments. These men have interleaved the Bible, and, scrawling their own absurd texts and comments upon the blank pages, put forth an improved version of the book of God.

They would turn all the denunciations of scripture against the single sin of inordinate indulgence of the appetite. They would make repletion the Anti-Christ, and prove that penal fires and scorplings of conscience are prepared for him who dares partake in liberal measure of the gifts and bounties of Heaven. All things in the two testaments are, in the misty fancies of these fanatical dreamers, typical of intemperance in eating.

Thus, in the book of Numbers, occurs the following passage: “*So they did eat and were*



filled, for he gave them their own desire; they were not estranged from their lust; but while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel." Here, according to the dietists, is a vigorous argument against corpulency and animal food. On the surface it seems so; and as the philosophical dogmatists to whom we refer, abhor the labor of diving, we suppose they are very well pleased with such deduction. Because they were slain "while the meat was yet in their mouths," a judgment is pronounced, they believe, against animal food. This, therefore, is an argument for vegetable diet. But, by turning to a verse in the same chapter, which precedes the one we have quoted, the learned pundits will discover that the Israelitish appetite was as keen for vegetable as animal diet; so that the denunciation was directed as strongly against the one as the other. "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely! the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic." Here is not only fish and flesh, but as select and delicate a regimen of greens as one could wish. But the "fattest" were slain. That is very true, and it seems to us (no very profound biblical critics) that they were particularly smitten because they repined against the manna which had been, to them at least, most healthy and invigorating sustenance. But with our new apostles it is no matter. They were punished for rebellious murmuring, while their mouths were filled with flesh—therefore, flesh-eating is sinful; not merely eating too much of whatever it be, nor even intemperate flesh-eating—but any, the least degree of flesh-eating whatever.

Not only (if they are to be believed) is Grahamism the great burden of the Scripture, but it is to be the great auxiliary in spreading Christianity over the earth. The fiend infidelity is to be put out of the way by nothing less than spare diet and a course of vegetables. "This demon," says Hitchcock, the erudite founder of the dietetic college, "can not be successfully met and encountered by the puny arm and shrinking sensibility of dyspepsy. It needs the resolution, the assured faith, and the energetic action of our pilgrim fathers. And then again, what but the strong arm, and the resolute courage, and unwavering faith, of men sustained by EUPEPSY as well as the grace of God, can urge forward, into the dark and untrodden fields of spiritual death, the mighty wheels of benevolence that are in motion?" Sustained by eupepsy AS WELL as the grace of God! This is good; it is admirable; a flight not contemptible—at least as high as the *fifth* heaven of invention. Have courage—he will be shortly in the seventh! Rising on the wing, toward the region we have indicated, he bursts out in the full fervor of Grahamism: "*They were eupeptics who carried the gospel over the east, in primitive times. They were eupeptics who, in modern times, have*

*successfully engaged in the same work; AND THEY MUST BE EUPEPTICS WHO ARE TO BRING ON THE MILLENIUM.*"

We doubt much whether there will be any human beings extant by the arrival of the millenium, if the dietetic system should be universally adopted. It hath a rapid operation in translating its professors from the "smoke and stir of this dim spot." Their career on this road to health brings them speedily in sight of tombstones and family vaults. Pretending by their false and base empiricism to lengthen, they absolutely abbreviate life. There is an amount of moral evil thus committed, which, but for the ignorance of its apostles, should place empirical dietetics at once on the list with murder.

He who, in a time of scarcity, forestalls the market, and by a monopoly of provisions stints the people of their proper supply, is held guilty of treason to the community, and, in some codes of law, is subject to the penalty of death. But the dietetic preachers would actually snatch from the lips the very sustenance which its possessor has in abundance, or can purchase with ease. He perishes, deluded by the sophisms of pretenders, in the midst of a full granary. He falls surrounded by harvests of the richest wheat. He starves in sight of a thousand platters, smoking with substantial fare. In truth, this whole system seems to be a disguised and ignoble attempt to establish a kind of monkish creed in the New World. It is a phantom of the middle ages, revived from its slumbers, and put forth again into the waking light to marshal under its tattered and faded banner, retouched and repaired, all that class of human beings who, in every age, jump at novelties, and are willing to go out and join in a crusade against their own health, happiness, and peace of mind, provided it is done in the guise of accomplishing some mighty moral or national purpose, and provided some special mountebank appears boldly in the van to lead them on. In this case starvation has turned crusader and philanthropist, and by its stalwart strength promises to banish poverty and crime; to annihilate acute and chronic diseases and nervous maladies; to clear and strengthen the mind; to elevate and purify the morals; to brighten and invigorate the religious affections; and, finally, to bring about the millenium! Health, morals, and intellect, all hang on this. Eupepsy is the good principle, the evil one is a mighty dyspepsy.

We may remark, in passing, that one learned professor hints that history might be hereafter written on dietetic principles, and gives us an illustration of the manner in which it could be managed, by speaking of England as presenting "an alarming contrast between the eupeptic days of Elizabeth and the dyspeptic times of George the Fourth." Cooks, we suppose, are henceforward to write the chronicles of the times, and waiters will take charge of memoirs and the lighter sketches of manners, morals,

and customs. We may apply to them, in anticipation, the language which the learned professor of chymistry and natural history uses in reference to the wonders which might be achieved by a phalanx of eueptic youth: "*Oh, the light and influence which they might thus send out into the world and down to posterity, would not, like other emanations proceeding from a centre, spread and increase in the slow ratio of the square of the distance and the time; but in a ratio so high, that the quadratics of the millenium could alone express and resolve it!*"! Certainly, one of the most singular and mathematical emanations we ever read of! We think the professor must have (in addition to his aforesaid duties) a small class in celestial trigonometry under his charge.

The dietetic philosophers, whether they intend it or not, are practical atheists, for they rob God of one of his essential attributes, by supposing that he has created the animal and vegetable world merely to prey on each other and encumber the earth. They render it a shrewd problem, too, to explain why man has carnivorous teeth.

We consider this system also as the most pernicious and abhorrent, when we look upon it as a fanatical attempt to shut out from mankind certain sources of happiness and enjoyment, which were clearly provided and intended for them in the economy of the earth. We humbly believe that *all things* were made to be enjoyed rationally, temperately, and with an eye to the great Benefactor. The universe was not only built for the eye, that man might sit in its midst, like a child at a theatre, and gaze on its wonderful and shifting scenes, its strange and grand actings and decorations. There are also other senses which in their measure may be gratified. That is a poor mystery of gastronomy, which feeds the eyes and leaves the stomach famished.

If these philosopherlings can not learn from the constitution and history of their own species what is due to themselves and their kind, let them turn to the animal creation and gather an example. They at least remind us of one class of feathered bipeds. Of all the fowls of the air, the most contemptible is a mongrel heron, known familiarly as the *mudpoke*. The mudpoke we take to be your best natural disciple of Grahamism. He feeds little, and that little does him small good. His digestion, such as it is, is rapid indeed, but dry. Lean-visaged and cadaverous, he sits upon a hard branch or rail, and looking heaven in the face, with a pharasaical expression of countenance, he draws a short denunciation in loud treble, against high livers and good feeders. His skin hangs about his bones like a coat ill-cut. He keeps good hours, it is true—is never out late at night, like the nightingale—is never found at a merrymaking, nor high in the air, at morn, with the lark, singing out his gratitude to the Giver of all good. He feeds solitary on crusts and scraps; drinks but little, and that of the stalest

puddle; and is, in fact, a Graham in feathers; a deliverer of dry lectures, from sapless tree-tops; and his only fault is that *his* digestion is a trifle too lively.

Those who have advocated in public the spare system of diet, have generally been men who have made a previous pilgrimage through the catalogue of maladies, and who, therefore, assume to be the most profoundly skilled in the prescriptions necessary for each. From having suffered much themselves, they believe they have an equitable privilege to make others suffer in a like degree. They become skilled in the gnostics of every complaint, and by a sweeping specific, purge the materia medica of every malady save that with which they, as patients, had been afflicted. Now, of all sorts of tampering, we think tampering with the human system is the most abominable and pernicious. There is a class of sciolists, and those of whom we have spoken belong to it, who believe that all kinds of experiments are to be ventured upon the human constitution; that it is to be hoisted by pulleys and depressed by weights; pushed forward by rotary principles, and pulled back by stop-springs and regulators. They have finally succeeded in looking upon the human frame, much as a neighboring alliance of stronger powers regards a petty state which is doing well in the world and is ambitious of rising in it. It must be kept under. It must be fettered by treaties and protocols without number. This river it must not cross; at the foot of that mountain it must pause. An attempt to include yonder forest in its territories would awaken the wrath of its powerful superiors, and they would crush it instantly. Or the body is treated somewhat as a small-spirited carter treats his horse; it must be kept on a handful of oats and made to do a full day's work. Famine has become custodian of the key which unlocks the gate to health, to knowledge, to religious improvement, and the millenium!

Unless checked, this wild fanaticism will sweep through the land, overthrowing every social comfort, every physical enjoyment, every pleasure that springs from sense and refers to sense. Indulgence in the common luxuries of air and water, will be soon set down in the index expurgatorial as a crime; and punishments and penalties be attached to every gradation of bodily comfort. To feel the pulse throb with joy, or the cheek glow with delight, or the heart beat under the genial influence of springtime or autumn; in fine, to yield in any way to the generous and universal emotions of humanity, will next be deemed a damnable heresy and perversion of our moral faculties. The adventurous champions of this dietetical Quixotism, would ride through the country armed cap-a-pie with argument and denunciation, and, like the Moss-troopers of the Scottish border, snatch from the peasant's pot his haunch of mutton or round of beef, and force him to dine on kale and cold water.

These men know not—they have no dream—of the injury they would inflict on the poor by depriving them of animal food, and the little (what seems to us, at least, little) luxury of a healthy and savory meal. Their daily bread is the only comfort that many of the poor enjoy. They have no knowledge of books—no music—no pleasant, festive companies, where care is laughed or danced away—no concerts nor anniversaries—no resources of thought or conversation—none of those delicate, refined sensations, which are perpetual inlets to the thoughtful and educated—no poetical joy in the fair shows of nature, and at best nothing more than a ruder sort of religion, which exhibits itself in a simple, single, undoubting faith. Their “life is rounded with” a meal. In this they are imparadised. Nature has not denied to them the common and yet sweet enjoyments of the palate. Sitting at their rude tables, with their clean and well-cooked mutton or steak, they are equal to kings. The most royal of the earth can not enthrone themselves with a finer sense of sweetness on golden thrones or under canopies of purple. Who would rob the poor of such dainties?

Be not afraid! ye poor of the land. God’s bounties flow, in these regions at least, from a perennial urn. God still walks on the hill and in the valley, and cheers the husbandman in his labors. Be not afraid!—forward through many years of household happiness, may ye look for well-filled boards and hearthstones savory with daily comforts and consolations. While God guides your plough and gives the increase to your honest toil, eat your bread in peace. No fanatical visionary, no arbitrary and self-willed man shall rob you of these. Your own good sense, the good sense of your friends and countrymen, will save you from the desolation which these wild men would bring upon you in common with all.

The people will not hearken to their mad appeal. There is an instinct above all knowledge. Guided by that, our countrymen will scorn the starveling philosophy of Graham, and the wild theories of Hitchcock. Our broad meadows will still sustain their noble herds; and still shall the cool stream and the open sea nurture its kind to strengthen and cheer the sons of the earth. Our rich wheatfields shall whiten as of old, and the pure loaf be called the staff of life, though ignorant and reckless men would strike it down and bring man level with the earth and the brute that feeds on husks and grass.

Sad and bitter consequences, God knows, have already flowed from these false doctrines. Alas! how many pale students, future ornaments and defenders of their country, if permitted to live; how many fair daughters; how many mothers, blessed and blessing; how many merchants, sagacious in business and liberal in leisure; how many ministers of God, hallowed oracles and voices of Heaven; how many of the good, the great, the young, and the aged—the tender-hearted and the learned and wise, have already fallen before the arm of this hom-

icidal and accursed dogma? In pale and sickly troops they totter down the road to the grave and lay themselves on the cold pillow of their last slumber, emaciated, ghastly, the victims of the cunning impostor who used imagination as his tool, and with it undermined the “house of life.” Upon their ashes we build a monument, dedicated to temperate enjoyment of the bounties of the air, the earth, and the sea!

[THE author might, in mercantile phrase, evade legal liability on the two or three sketches following, on the ground that they were produced before he had arrived at an age when one acquires the right to *utter paper*. As more advanced life is, however, glad enough at times to draw upon youth and habits then acquired, in excuse of older offences, the author foregoes his plea, with the hope of showing, by their reproduction, at how early a period he had fallen upon a vein of writing which (whether good or bad) he has since wrought upon in one or two more elaborate works. The “trick of it” was, he thinks the reader will admit, in the blood, and not caught from foreign sources.]

## JEDUTHAN HOBBS.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF A METROPOLITAN BOOK-PEDLAR.

(*Knickerbocker Magazine*, April, 1835.)

IN his life-time Jeduthan Hobbs had never suited himself with a dwelling-place. He was ever flitting about, like a swallow on the wing, from garret to garret. He has chambers now, against which he can never more repine. A few nails, and boards of lath, have shut out apprehension, and care, and poverty. No longer shall rich repasts, and the panorama of delicate viands, move before his eye, which his tongue may not taste. No longer shall his gaunt form traverse the pavement of public hostels, living on steams and odors. From the unceremonious touch of catpoles, henceforth, the person of Jeduthan Hobbs is sacred.

They laid him according to his wish. He had prayed, almost to the last hour of his life, that Providence would grant him the farewell privilege of selecting a spot for his grave, which might be his own—the first and last cantle of property he should ever possess. And at the moment when death was holding his final parley for the surrender of his body, a missive arrived from a deceased aunt, bearing within a gift just sufficient to purchase the dying man the luxury of renting independently his last habitation.

It was chosen strangely—one lone, solitary strip of green, imbedded in rocks. It wert

vain to attempt to fathom this fancy. Perhaps he wished to leave it as a testimonial—though dark and difficult the interpretation—that thus his heart had retained its freshness and verdure, in the very midst of the rough roads and stony circumstances of life.

His face, when living, was the very dial-plate of hope. He lived on glorious expectation. He breakfasted on hope, dined on hope, and was even oftentimes forced, for the want of more substantial food, to make his supper from the same dish. Yet was he ever uncomplaining. He was monarch over all futurity. No black usurper dared intrude upon that ample realm. He peopled it with his own subjects. They never disobeyed his kingly authority, but ever came at his beck. How well I remember the last time I beheld him! He had just given—poor and lowly as he was—a cheerful volume, to a pale, thin young man, in a faded black coat, who had been standing at a book-stall, at the corner of the street, filching a little mental entertainment from a meager collection of dingy tomes. "Poor fellow!" said Hobbs, "he has been better days; but he should needs be happy now, for I have given him a glorious companion, and I have just read to him these truth-speaking lines from good old Spenser." And the kind donor set down his humble basket upon the flags, and with a benevolent chuckle, read thus from a thumbed, yellow-leaved octavo:

"Ah! why doth flesh, a bubble-glass of breath,  
Hunt after honor and advancement vain,  
And rear a trophy for devouring Death,  
With so great labor and long-lasting pain,  
As if his days for ever should remain?  
Sith all that in this world is great or gay,  
Doth, as a vapor, vanish and decay.

"Look back who list unto the former ages,  
And call to count what is of them become;  
Where be those high-born men, those antique  
Which of all grandeur knew the perfect sum?  
Where those great warriors, which did overcome  
The world with conquest of their might and main,  
And made one mead of the earth and of their reign?"

Thus, with a fine vein of philosophy, would Hobbs beguile penury of bitter remembrances, and rob sharp misery of its pangs.

He would sit in his veteran arm-chair, at the end of a long summer day, and looking through the dusky panes of a narrow dormer window, point to the sun melting afar over the Jersey hills—dropping gently and softly, as a babe to its evening slumbers. "That sun," he would exclaim, "rises brighter to-morrow, because it rises on a happier man. My friend, I am not crack-brained nor visionary. In truth, poor denizens like me have no right to share that privilege of the titled and wealthy. But I do believe there is some great blessing in store for me—some overwhelming joy—that, like wine on the lees, is but improving its flavor, by age, for my palate."

"But, Hobbs, how can you revel in such delights, with these wrecks about you? How

can you, from a garret, like Moses from Pisgah, steal such glimpses of a promised land?"

"Do you see," was his answer, "yonder flight of birds, fanning the rosy air around the setting sun? Mark you how their wings are gilded with royal gold and purple, as they bathe themselves in the fading day-beams? So, my friend, every thought, every imagination, every common object and meaner sight, in passing through my soul, is transmuted into a precious and golden reality, that, though it may have no existence in this world of fact, transports me into a heaven!"

"What heaven? The bigot's—the sectarian's?"

"No, friend, there can be no heaven where dwells the bigot or the sectarian. I mean his heaven whose tastes are refined, whose eyes are as crystal mirrors, reflecting joyously the Creator's little universe below, the fair scenes of nature, and the glories of air, earth, and sea. Such alone can live in heaven. To brute minds—minds that have no spirit, but are all sinew and flesh—heaven would be but a 'worse hell.'"

Thus have we whiled hour after hour, in pleasant converse, pilfering many a smile from the wrinkled face of time, and smoothing the yet untrodden road to the inevitable churchyard. The vocation of my friend was a modest and humble one. He was a book-peddler. He wended from house to house—a merchant of the mind—bearing in his basket and pack the rich products of every clime in which intellect grows and buds.

He was born with a love for books. The first object on which his infant eyes opened, must have been the family Bible, or a copy of the household almanac. He delighted, as soon as his feeble hands could lift a volume, to gaze on its black rows of letters. When his mind expanded, its first dawns were spent in marshaling words in order, to form some little "composition." He took a kind of military pride, in drilling the twenty-four letters of the alphabet, in banding them into petty companies. As he grew older he assumed his calling. It was congenial, though lowly. He loved to pass from dwelling to dwelling, dealing out, as it were, delight by the handful—handing over whole treasures of joy, volumes of fun and knowledge. And he himself had been at the festival, he had partaken of the feast.

He came at length to be known, to be loved, to be welcomed. His face broadened and brightened into the sun of many a house; and wherever he threw a beam, some tender flower, or some happy sentiment would spring and blossom. He was the sower of good seed, and he reaped the harvest that follows it.

And thus he spent twenty years. He was the father of the book-peddlers. Much they honored him; and, when chance had gathered a circle of them together, they listened with eager ears to his tales of the elder days of their trade—how it had begun from nothing, how, on

one bright summer morning, when he had risen early and saw the milkmen and bakers busy distributing their comforts, the thought struck him, what a good and pleasant thing it would be, if some kind people would thus actively and alertly serve the aliment of mind to as needy customers—how the thought would every morning visit his soul—how he gave it welcome—and, finally, how he became the pioneer in the cause, dandling, as it were, the profession upon his knee, until it had arrived to its present manhood, sending its missionaries into every nook and corner of the heathen city.

Farewell, Hobbs! I had said more and better things of thee, but my pen would drop nothing but tears. Farewell! Thou hast left this world of book-making, book-reading, and book-peddling, and art gone, I trust, where angels chant poetry, and the face of thy Maker shall be to thee, for perusal, thy brightest book!

### THE LATE BEN. SMITH, LOAFER.

(*Knickerbocker Magazine*, July, 1835.)

I HAVE wept for the death of the late Benjamin Smith until I can weep no more, and I have come to the conclusion to vent the superflux of my grief in ink-drops. Ben. was a metropolitan loafer, and a phenomenon. He was the ruling luminary of a whole shoal of shag-tailed comets that used to shoot madly about the terrestrial firmament of New York. He was not a New Yorker, though born, bred, and reared in this town. He had a *spirit* beyond and above it. I sometimes conjectured that he was stolen in his infancy from Thomson's "Castle of Indolence," or that he was merely a transient visitor from Rabelais' island, where industrious sluggards are paid sixpence ha'penny a day for hard sleeping. As a faithful historian, however, I am compelled to state, that my hero did actually come into the world by the connivance of Susan and Samuel Smith, loafer and loafress of this burgh—not exactly under a favorable planet—but with the auspicious light of a brown, sputtering tallow candle.

His education was not collegiate or academical. It was obtained, most of it, in the open air, without the superfluous expense of books, ferules, or schoolmasters. In truth, he considered flagellation as a serious hinderance to the circulation of the intellectual fluids. He could not believe that it constituted an essential element in education; and he often averred, in proof of his position, that he was acquainted with a cart-horse that had been belabored all his life-time, and yet was as ignorant as an ass to this day! Ben., however, had a diploma to show, written on sheepskin, in legible characters, and signed by competent authority. He offered one day to produce it, before me, by stripping his jacket. I excused him.

Young Benjamin Smith—like all remarkable

young men—had original views of this world. He considered it, in the first place, as a large dormitory, or bedroom; in the second place, as a stupendous cook-shop; and, in the third, as an unbounded loafing-ground. And these views would he defend with the pertinacity of a congressman. Ask him why the wharves and pier-heads were constructed? "Fine places to stretch in the sun!" was his answer. "Why was the court of sessions established by the legislature?" "To help and further sleeping." "Why ministers ordained and consecrated?" "To encourage somnolence." "Why the corporation opened fair streets, laid sidewalks, labelled the corners?" "To point out the shortest cut to the best loafing-grounds."

On ordinary occasions Smith was pedestrian, but sometimes he could prevail on a crony in the next grade of life above himself, to give him an airing to Harlaem. These were his gala days—the real holidays of his heart. "Farewell! ye foot-pad loafers," he would exclaim, as he mounted the vehicle, "trudge on—trudge on, and wear out your shoes! I am Christian henceforth, and believe in Providence, in that he has created horses!" Truly, he was a great man in his tours to Harlaem, Kingsbridge, and parts adjacent. He would sit in his friend's carriage, on a cross-board (for his charioteer was generally a friendly Irishman, on a journey for a load of dirt), and bracing his feet with a most determined air, would grasp the reins with a fierceness, and draw in his ghost of a steed with a nerve that often produced an electric titter from the lookers-on. He was irresistible.

Smith was fond of music, and whistled every other mile all the way. He took much pride in this accomplishment, which he had almost cultivated into a fine art by his assiduity. He had carried it to such a pitch of perfection, that he very often whistled for his dinner. He told me when I last saw him, that he had been trying his mouth on a piece of sentimental music, and that it needed only one quaver and a bar to make it complete. Alas, poor Ben.! He is now gone. He fell the victim of an attempt to whistle a dull senator's speech in Congress. He was heard late at night, rehearsing; the next morning he was found lying on his back, with his mouth wide agape, and drawn askew by the violence of the attempt. The result of the crowner's quest was, that the deceased came to his death by a long sentence in Senator —'s last harangue.

I HAVE forgotten thus far—an omission almost unpardonable in a small novelist—to sketch the person and habiliments of my hero. I will "about it straight."

Benjamin Smith, then, was a tall loafer, surmounted with a well-woven and well-entangled mat of hair, that proved dame nature no indifferent hatter. His frame was a bundle of rods, or straight pipe-stem bones, wired togeth-

er with small ligaments, and swinging easily in their sockets, to and fro, as he shuffled through the street. He was tall, nay, gigantic, in an upward direction; a peculiarity from which he drew the ingenious inference that if angels ever came from above (and here he would look reverently up), he believed about their highest landing place would be his head! This procerity, with his stationary habits, would have rendered his crown a grand building spot for a crow's nest, or the little Parnassus of a flock of singing birds. He would have sold the fee-simple for a gin sling, and have never harmed an occupant in the world.

How shall I describe his dress? 'Tis like drawing a note for a thousand dollars, with an empty pocket to meet it. Alas! he had no dress; nothing that could be considered a broad-cloth synonym for the word—nothing that a tailor would have dignified with the name. The very alms-house pensioners would have laughed at his variegated coat and unmentionables. They were patches of color, and shreds of nothing; the very ghosts of defunct habiliments; indigo blue at the bottom, and red at the top, the intervals interspersed with an assortment of shades. He was a walking rainbow, and an observer might have thought that he had eyes in every inch of his body, from the spots of flesh that peeped forth from the irregular casements of his "looped and windowed raggedness." In the event of a war, in his time, he would have been a fine mark for small shot.

Possessing these inimitable graces of person and pantaloons—together with a large amount of intellect, to which I have not alluded, on the supposition that the shrewd reader would take it for granted—I was surprised, and often expressed such surprise to the surviving friends of Smith, that he never was sent to the legislature; for he was one of our distinguished "high-binders," and deserved promotion and a good office. And from the exhibition of certain gushes of genius, I am confident he would not have spent a winter at the capitol, without learning the difference between steam and botany, and that coal-heaving and legislation are two distinct departments of knowledge.

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WHAT was life to Ben Smith? A mere farce, during which pea-nuts might be munched, a nap taken, and a little laughter indulged. Some might have doubted whether he had a soul, or if any, a proper-sized one. Such cavillers should consider that the accommodations for that ethereal essence were not ample. There is a test that brings out one's soul as easily and certainly as the knuckle elicits a spark from the Leyden jar, a small and inevitable event (for like death, it comes sooner or later to all), that shakes up and jostles out a man's spirit into broad daylight, like a cork from a bottle, or a bird from its nest. *He loved.* He rehearsed his little two act pathetic comedy (for love

is made up of laughter and tears), in such by- corners and strange places as poverty affords.

To him and his beloved, garrets must needs be drawing-rooms, and public streets parlors. Cupid furnished no perfumery or purple hangings for my hero and his enamorata. The courtship commenced in an alley, where the lover saw his "fond one" bearing a basket of cold victuals to a blind aunt. The attitude was romantic, and the heart can not be always on its guard. Subsequent interviews were had at the pump. She stole slyly into his bosom, and left her little miniature on his heart. It was better framed than if in gold, and more wisely; for those who have golden miniatures of their mistresses, are apt to love gold better than their mistress. Smith's chosen was a small, dark-eyed girl, with a neck of snow, and black tresses that lay upon it in happy contrast. Her step was light and elastic, and her voice bird-like, though uncultivated.

I will not insult humble love, by describing her weather-worn and use-worn garments. She was clothed in feeling, home-spun, indeed, but heart-spun, as well, and worth all your silks and jewels. They were wedded. It was the very night before his melancholy demise, which I would fain think I have drawn with a just remembrance of his virtues. Poor girl! She knew not that death's high-constable was so near, and so soon to serve his warrant. She would gladly have put in bail, but it was not permitted her. Let me not open the vial of her sorrows afresh. She is yet living, lowly, and disconsolate.

A word touching the funeral of the departed. His demise, for he was a *royal* ragamuffin, spread universal sorrow through all ranks of the loafer community. The very beggars' dogs seemed to be afflicted and cast down, as if they had lost a father. The hour of his burial was fixed at four o'clock, P. M., on the day of his death, in order that his gentlemen cronies might be allowed good time to arise from bed, and that they might return from the ceremony late enough for a fashionable dinner. Supported by two sturdy associates, his mortal remains were escorted to a snug corner of Potter's Field—the true Westminster Abbey of New York paupers. No clergyman was present to administer the rites of sepulture. A brother loafer officiated, but not like an ordinary functionary. With his companions, he had inspired himself with tears at a neighboring temple of spirits, and instead of the cold, stereotyped tones of official sorrow, he gave out (in the moving melting accents of poetical pauperized pity), verse by verse, as is the manner in methodist chapels, a "talented" requiem, of which the following stanzas were all that I was enabled to remember:

"Toll, toll the watch-house bell,  
Sound loud the sad conch-shell,  
For Ben is gone!  
He did no harm,—all's well;  
A-whistling brave he fell,—  
His loafing's done!



"Weep docks, wharves, cotton-bags?  
Ben greets no more with rags  
Your honored beds;  
A little here he lagged  
Then to his heaven Ben jagged,  
And dropped his shreds!"

Let me add one word of eulogy in prose. Ben was no gentleman, for he had never pulled any man's nose nor fought a duel; no Christian, for he never sung psalms loudly in church, nor disturbed a whole congregation with the ostentatious clink of his silver in the plate; no merchant, for he was totally ignorant of that finest of fine arts, the art of splitting one sixpence into two; no philanthropist, for he was not a member of the society for the promotion of self-righteousness; and no politician, for he had two eyes. Neither was he a learned man, for he could eat pudding without knowing how it was compounded. He was simply what I have set forth, "THE LATE BENJAMIN SMITH, LOAFER."

### A SERIOUS ARGUMENT

AGAINST THE USE OF CLOTHING: ADDRESSED  
TO TAILORS.

(*Knickerbocker Magazine*, Nov., 1836.)

"Some were for the utter extirpation  
Of linsey-woolsey in the nation."—HUDIBRAS.

I TRUST I shall not be suspected of the purpose, in this paper, of putting an insult upon the respectable fraternity to whom it is addressed. On the contrary, I have hopes, built upon the justice of my object and the purity of my wishes, to win them over to the view I intend to take, and to convince them that a refined and nice moral sense, as well as a lofty and philosophical comprehension of the fitness of things, requires at their hands an immediate abandonment of the profession in which they are at present engaged. I trust to be able to prove to them that it is their duty to break in pieces their lapboards, take down their signs, give their iron geese the wing, and bid a long farewell to skein and needle.

Beside the urgent necessity resting upon them of restoring themselves, physically, to that erect posture from which they have fallen, I shall bring before them reasons more purely addressed to their understanding.

It is clear, then, in the first place, that tailors came in with the fall. Adam, in his primitive condition, ennobled by the complete development of every power of the mind and nerve of the body—a profounder philosopher than Bacon—superior (in all probability) in imagination to Shakspeare—as a musician, sweeter than Mozart, and, in fact, as a universal handicraftsman, to all the world since—Adam—what was the secret, or, at least, the development of all his power? HE WENT UNDRESSED! If I may so speak, without irreverence to the

founder of our family, he was the Great Shirtless.

His descendants degenerated. They were trowsered and coated. And this was the first sad symptom of the fall. Had not pantaloons been introduced, there had been hope for man. The downfall was not complete—the destruction was not irremediable—the last chain was not irrevocably bound upon us—till Adam drew on his first pair of indispensables. Of immorality

—“the primitive tradition reaches  
As far as Adam's first green breeches.”

In making up the account of our depravity, we must halt here. Farther backward we can not journey.

Adam, before this, might have perpetrated the indecency of talking Dutch in the Garden; but we have no records—no authentic history of that absurdity. We begin with the surmounting of the articles set forth in the couplet.

He drew them on, not like a modern juvenile, with exultant eyes and eager limbs (though they were his first suit), but with sorrowing and tears. Through the two narrow vistas down which his legs descended, as through the tubes of a telescope, he saw the degradation of his race. Bloody-visaged war and hypocritical peace, pestilence and famine, disease and death, peered at him through those twin openings.

Oh! had that fatal suit never been donned, how glorious a spectacle would this our world present! It would have swarmed with tall and pure intelligences “only less than the angels.” But mark the consequences! Cain becomes a butcher, and Abel a huckster—afterward, the first a vagabond, the second a carcass.

Such were the disgraces which the first clothing put upon our humanity. Every age, since the ejection of our first parent from his territories, has seen their renewal. If man had remained to this hour unclothed and unshirted, he had been still pure and happy. But misery and dress go together—they are natural yokefellows. Whenever I see a pair of breeches I think of original sin, and smallclothes remind me of total depravity. A frock-coat is to me the exponent of damnation, and a tight-bodied one the sign and token of eternal torture.

Is it not our duty, then, to put away from us these mementoes of our shame? to cast to the winds these daily slaves of Philip, whose ever business it is to babble in our ears, “Thou must die!” Shall we endure these provocative monitors? shall we put up with these woollen impertinences?—manufactured disturbers of peace?—these hangers-on?

I think not. Better visions dawn upon me. I see the Naked Age approaching. I see the time when tailors' bills shall be no more, or become mere matters of history—remembered, only to be classed with the witches and goblins which afflicted our ancestors.

The argument against clothing assumes, if possible, a still more serious aspect, when examined in its connexion with the *dignity* of man.



It must be confessed, that all objects are pure, in proportion as they are free from contingents and adjuncts. The diamond only when cleaned from its imbedding earth exhibits its full lustre, and the pearl shines not forth in its clear, native whiteness, till disinterred from the confining oyster. Sir Isaac Newton was of opinion that the only sorts of chaste matter on earth were certain fine particles, or impenetrable finite atoms, and that all other matter was a mere mongrel. He considered the pure existence of atoms to be in a state of undress. I agree with the venerable author of the pippin (sometimes called the gravitating) philosophy. Man is among the corruptible—the adulterated—the impure.

There is something to me ludicrous in the very physical structure of man. He is a "forked radish." It always seemed to me some strange error or accident in his formation, that he was divided and cleft at the bottom. It would better fulfil my notions of symmetry, if he were fashioned column-like and progressed with one leg. By having two, it would seem as if, in some convulsion of nature he had *split up*.

My notions of a perfect being, gentle reader—to let thee a little into some new mysteries—is (abandoning the columnar doctrine), as a shapeless and invisible cloud, containing in itself the power of motion, and floating about, guided by mere impulse. I would have it possess a full source of harmony, and capable of breathing music and sweet sounds at will. It should journey to and fro, in company with the seasons; it should rest under the shadow of a mountain in Greece, and melt into crimson and golden hues in our own far west. Sometimes it should glide noiselessly amid the flowers, the rare and pleasant flowers of England, or over the famed war-fields of old France. It should possess the perfect power of metempsychosis or transition; at one time it might cool, far up in the ether, into all the delicious freshness of snow, and at another dissolve in all the sweet summer tenderness of rain.

But mark me; it should be no common cloud, this perfect creature, this paragon, this phoenix of mine. It should bear about in the heavens no semblance of garments. It should figure forth to the clown or the school-boy's brain no rude monster bedighted in fantastical apparel; no celestial Dutchmen; no well-breeched harlequin; no valorous chieftains, with black cocked hats, made of wind, with swords of vapor. No; but there, pillowed on the air, my human cloud, my immortal fragment of ether, my animate and beautiful substitute for man, should sit and become intellectual with thought.

"Beautiful cloud! I would I were with thee,  
In thy calm way o'er land and sea;  
To rest on thy unrolling skirts and look  
On earth as on an open book!"

By looking at your next neighbor, you will soon see that he is no such thing as my perfect and symmetrical being. You will not only see that he is a little toy, moulded of clay, but that

he is also tricked out in that inhuman absurdity styled dress. From the chin to the heels, he is a tailor's ape. What an abasement!—how desperate a degradation!

Man, it seems, can not be man without this pitiful adjunct; he is a tree that blooms not without this foliage. And yet it irks him; it it is a bondage to him, to be cased up thus within wooden walls. His soul lives in a double prison; it is egg within egg; first a shell of clay, and next an outer covering upon that of cloth. How is it possible for orators and divines to reach this doubly-defended nucleus? Can a refined sentiment make its way through broadcloth? or will a pointed thought, or fierce denunciation pierce the solidity of a Petersham?

Man goeth about bearing his own shame as a burden upon his back; and yet he aspires to mate with the angels. Think you they stoop to these appendages? That they walk the heavenly avenues, cultivating the cock of a hat, or staking the happiness of their immortal natures on the roll of a collar? No: the higher we ascend the scale of intelligence, the less do we find of this vain incumbrance.

Even the brute has a lesson for us here. The horse—does he wear aught over his leathern jerkin? And have I not seen Sir Goat strut forth with only his mohair cloak cast over his shoulder, with much of native and dignified simplicity?

Let us sift our notions nicely, then, and with candor, and we shall speedily learn that we have an instinct within us which preacheth against clothing, at least against the modern modification of that vestness.

Perhaps we may conceive, with some show of reason, of Alcibiades promenading our Broadway with a cane and whiskers, or the Emperor Otho arranging his curls in faultless mirrors; but what say you, reader, to Socrates in the Portico philosophizing in a round-about? or Cicero walking the Forum (forecasting an oration against Catiline) in a pair of top-boots? or Plato in nankeens? or Pythagoras in a swallow-tail? Hercules in small-clothes? or Homer (pauper though he was) in a dicky?

It is beyond you—is it not?

POST SCRIPTUM.—When I had laid the first timbers, as it were of the above essay, I mentioned my views (such as I expected to set forth, and have set forth here), to a bosom friend of mine, confidentially. I think he must, in some failing moment, have broken his trust. It appears the tailors have "got wind" of the forthcoming argument, and are beginning to take steps to prevent the dissemination of its doctrines. The following I take from an evening paper:

"NOTICE.—TO TAILORS.—The tailors of the city of New York are respectfully invited to attend a meeting of the trade to be held at Jefferson House, on Monday evening next, when business of importance will be laid before them."

The mark at which this points is palpable.

I am farther corroborated in the belief that some movement is on foot among the Thimbles, from the circumstance that when the other day I was taking my customary afternoon's walk, I was met by a tailor's journeyman, who, in the usual hobbling style, was hurrying home with a coat on his left arm. As I passed him, the fellow, who by some mode or other had become acquainted with my person, put his unemployed hand into his 'hind pocket, and shook out his coat-tail deliberately in my face!

### SOLOMON QUIGG; EX-MEMBER OF CONGRESS.

(*Knickerbocker Magazine*, April, 1837.)

On the second step of a "stoop" in Broadway, sat Quigg—Solomon Quigg, ex-member of the nineteenth congress of the United States—casting about in his mind, like a melancholy heron, the means and devices for procuring a breakfast. While his large person expanded over the solid bench whereon he sat, his ponderous chin rested on one hand, and the other reposed in his breeches pocket; his eyes, meantime, travelling here and there, as if in search of something to silence the voice of hunger.

His dress was a congress of absurdities—a pie-bald coat, to which every tailor's shop in the city seemed to have sent its representative. While one leg of his blue pantaloons draggled on the ground, the other, apparently of a more aspiring disposition, mounted to the very knee. Half his coat was of a mixed gray, while the other moiety was of a lively crimson. His vest, originally the gift of a strolling player—whom Quigg had once patronised at Washington—had been so often remodelled and amended, that, like the constitution of a small debating society, scarce a shred of the original articles remained. The countenance of Quigg had certainly been once expressive; now, the only feature which retained a claim to that appellation, was a bulbous nose, which stood out from his face like the boom of a vessel, with a light run out at its extremity; a beacon of warning to all those who sail the sea of wine, lest one day when they dream not, shipwreck may befall them. The mouth, which had doubtless in days past been bearded with scorn, and stiff with haughty feeling, now hung loose and agape, like an old lady's worn-out purse. On the summit of his head rested an ancient, bell-shaped hat, the crown of which had partly given way, and lifted up and down, like the lid of a pipkin, with every passing gust of wind. It seemed to be a convenience, by which the wearer's more devout thoughts might find a shorter road to heaven.

At times as Quigg sat thus, with an elbow on his knee, a tear, despite a certain effort at self-control, would steal from the corner of his

eye, and resting for a moment on a crow-foot wrinkle underneath it, run down his cheek beside, just so as to escape his mouth, over his chin, and fall to the ground.

His aspect expressed, to me at least, a certain regret for the past, and doubt of the future. Quigg the congressman was now but a ragged gentleman—a loafer. As he sat upon that cold stone, weeping in tatters, he was, unconsciously, the representative of a constituency larger than his original political one; namely, of that vast body known as decayed politicians—a red-faced, tavern-haunting tribe; fishes who live in an ocean of liquor, and yet are always athirst; the cast-off leaders of parties; demagogues out of favor; office-holders thrust into that direst Erebus—*out-of-office*. The cushion of state Quigg had exchanged for a more substantial bench in the open sunshine. No longer a servant of the people, he was the lacquey of his own sweet will. Abandoning the dress-circle of fashionable life, where he had once revolved a special planet, he looked upon it from an humble corner in the pit. And yet hunger was not so easily to be got over. It is a creditor who takes up its mansion within ourselves, and devours our very seat of life, till it be paid the uttermost farthing. Quigg was in a perplexity.

THE room into which Solomon Quigg was ushered that night—when he had passed triumphantly through the Marengo, the Austerlitz, and the Waterloo of the day—breakfast, dinner, and supper—was an upper chamber of an old tavern in the second ward of our metropolis. The tavern had once been the headquarters of a dominant political party. At a glance, Quigg read its history. On one side, the remnant of candle which he held in his hand gleamed on the dusty fragment of a flag which had erst waved proudly, illumined with the national stars and stripes. This was rolled up, and on it, as a pillow, Quigg laid his unkempt head. Near his right hand, on the floor, reposed a broken fiddle, which had once given forth cheering music to the freemen of the second ward. Against the instrument, reclined the relics of a tin-pan, half through the bottom of which was thrust a mouldering drum-stick, which in its better days had summoned from the cold metal sounds that stirred many a voter's bosom, and filled many an urchin heart with keen delight. In different corners of the humble attic, hung from pegs and nails, flags, banners, ensigns, and devices of a thousand kinds, setting forth, in monstrous capitals the virtues and qualifications of favorite candidates.

But—and this struck the somnolent eyes of Quigg with most force—on the corner of one of the tattered banners were the figures 18—; the very year in which Quigg himself had been elected, after a fierce struggle, to the American Congress. As he stretched himself for sleep, his hand by some mischance, struck against a

modest pine box, which stood perched just over his head; it came to the floor, and from its bowels rolled forth a heap of dusty papers, folded like doctors' prescriptions. He seized one of them, and on it found:

*For Congress.*

SOLOMON QUIGG.

Here was a theme for thought. Quigg now lay, as it were, before a wizard glass, over which passed in gloomy procession the achievements, the glories, and the triumphs, of his past life. In contrast with that bright langsyne, he felt the double bitterness of his present condition. His soul began to stir afresh, and to feel the throbbings of a revived ambition. A thousand plans and enterprises crowded his brain, and all that night he lay restless; meditating high schemes, and devising new ladders, in this his Jacob's vision, by which to reach the heaven of his desire. Quigg was once more an ambitious man.

On the bosom of the East river, cabled to the wharf, floated a light sloop, with its deck carefully scrubbed down, and its red flag floating gayly in the wind. Gently upon the water lay its cool image. From its anchorage to the wharf its tall mast reached, and tipped with its wavy shadow the countenance of a quiet idler, whose head rested on a decayed pile, while his feet hung carelessly over the wharf's end. On board the graceful vessel, extended flounderwise, with his twinkling eyes peering at the water over the sloop's stern, was stretched Solomon Quigg. A group of blue-fish had gathered just before him. Perhaps they expected a congressional effort. Ever and anon, Quigg would cast an eye toward the shore, as if in momentary expectation of the arrival of some personage or the turning-up of some matter of importance. About the time when the guard on board a man-of-war's man, which lay anchored in the middle of the stream, had sounded the three o'clock bell, a group of vagabond and listless persons began to gather before the vessel on whose deck Quigg reposed. Rapidly, dozen by dozen, their numbers increased. Every moment the collection became more extended and more motley. Stevedores, wharfingers, a stray customhouse officer—old gentlemen who had come to the neighboring market for fish—all aided in completing the human assortment.

Precisely at five, Quigg arose from his recumbent posture, ascended the rigging to the main-top, there took his stand, turned toward his auditory, took off his bell-shaped hat, cast it on the deck, and made a low and solemn bow, which was received by the vast congregation

with nine cheers. He then addressed them in a short speech, something in his old style of eloquence.

He could not resist the temptation of so high a pulpit. It was better, in that respect, than the floor of the house; it gave him a more commanding view of his audience. He closed his harangue with a touching allusion to the difficulty of obtaining a subsistence, and the brevity of life—and leaped! Through the air, like an arrow, Quigg descended to the water. His head cleaved its glassy surface; the lookers-on beheld his descending form, as, for an instant, his white feet glimmered above the river and then disappeared. Five minutes elapsed, and Quigg arose not. The crowd thought this a special feat, and gave three cheers. Five minutes more passed, and yet Quigg reascended not to the light. The feat was miraculous; the assemblage burst into three cheers again, heartier and more protracted than ever. A few philosophers among the audience began now to doubt the reappearance of the aquatic diver—the performance was too good to be fictitious. Another five minutes elapsed; an idle friend of Quigg's stepped out from the rabble and began to whimper.

The sun went down, and Solomon Quigg arose not. He had made his last dive. The river was searched, but no mortal relic discovered. In the soft river-mud he had found a ready coffin. In its liquid embraces slept forever the person of Solomon Quigg, ex-member of the nineteenth congress of the United States.

## THE UBIQUITOUS NEGRO.

*(American Monthly Magazine, Jan., 1838.)*

I HAVE noticed, any time these last ten years, a singular-looking creature—some would call him goblin—prowl about the purlicus of Theatre alley. This is his place of most frequent resort, but by no means his only one. In this region he has established his ordinary domicile. In the dark hall that stretches in the rear of the Park theatre he stalks most at home, in a sort of grim, epic grandeur, as if he held that region as his own. Bell's printing office, or some kindred place in the neighborhood, is his castle, the rest of New York his parks and pleasure-grounds. This very negro seems to be ubiquitous. Go whithersoever you will, Rumbout is there. He mingles with every festivity, and makes himself an element in every kind of business or pleasure that goes on in this great city. Carry yourself with the utmost speed to any part of the metropolis, there, in some shape or other, will turn up this African Ubiquity. Stroll, ride, fish, walk, sail, he presents himself as naturally, and in as good keep-

ing with the scenery you may be amid as the sky itself, or the grass, the water, or the pavement.

You are in Castle garden to see the balloon ascend; there is a vast crowd, innumerable faces, colors of dress, shapes of hat, canes, children, dogs, &c.; and yet you feel that the group is not complete, and that something is wanting to the perfect success of the aeronaut; and, just as he is about to slip himself loose from the earth, your unsatisfied eye falls on Rumbout, tugging at one of the cords, with his hands entangled, on the eve of ascending as a sort of unwilling plummet at the end of the rope to steady the air-ship. A happy voyage to thee, Rumbout; and be not the fate of Cocking thine!

Again, you are at the Parade ground, in the extreme northern quarter of the city. Before you flash the gaudy coats, gay plumes, glittering sabres of officers and privates; the mimic machinery of battle moves with admirable precision in admirable time. A certain solemnity hangs like a cloud over the place, as it might in actual engagement, when Death rides out on his white horse, distributing his darts on either side. Suddenly a mirthful roar shakes the field. You thrust through to learn the cause, and behold! the omnipresent Rumbout's arms dexterously pinioned together behind by the bayonet of the guard. He looks like a roasted fowl brought to the table with his arms reversed. He had attempted, with his naturally eager and inquisitive spirit, to get a nearer insight into the mysteries of warfare, and this is the result.

Chatham square is a singular locality—"a most ancient and fishlike" place. Any time in the day before two in the afternoon, you will see there as motley crowds as may be brought together in Christendom. As every one knows, it is the vendue of infirm furniture, disabled chairs, superannuated stoves, decayed bedsteads, neckless bottles, pots without legs, frameless looking-glasses, shirts without owners, owners without shirts. Finer voices, in some of the ordinary keys, you will nowhere find than belong to the eloquent auctioneers of the square. There is one, I know, hath the voice of a clarion; it stirs the spirit to its very depths, and is like a sudden call to battle. In a clear noon, when the wind is laid and he lifts it up: "How much! gentlemen, how much! how much for this small piece of spotted calico; gentlemen and ladies, how much!" the neighboring buildings shake to their base with the sound, the hackmen pause and listen; Catharine street, with its living tides, is silent, and the cartmen are astounded in their frocks. If there is any spare coin lurking in any secret corner of the pocket of any human being within reach of his lungs, it will be tolled from its "hidden residence" by this magician's spell. And among the buyers there is at times a voice to be heard scarcely inferior to his. A watch is up for sale; or, rather, I should say, that which was the coffin once of the living works, the vital parts of a chronometer; a huge, mon-

strous, unformed shape of metal. Whether tin or silver be the main ingredient in its composition, is not to be decided rashly. A sweet, fluent voice in the throng, however, assumes the decision; "Threepence per pound without the works, three and a half with!" It is the bugle voice of our friend Rumbout.

I have been out in many snowstorms, and always met Rumbout running hither and thither, half bent, with his hands in his pocket or a snow-shovel on his shoulder, looking for a "small job." It always excites odd feelings in me to see a negro in a snowstorm. Innumerable strange and jostling contrasts bustle into my brain, and make themselves busy in framing a many-colored web of humorous association. The absurdity is so bold between the pitch-black animalculæ moving about on the surface, and the white masses piling themselves around him on every side, and pressing upon him from above; as if the heavens would smother him to death with his opposite—a horrid mummy, wrapped in winding-sheet wide as creation. Foul blot on the page of nature. Death's-head in the midst of gay bells and merriment shows. Black swan on the clear stream of Sterchio, dimming its pellucid waters. Goblin, dungeon-intruder into the heaps of half-molten silver (as are these brilliant snowheaps), stealing upon them like a dark-visaged thief flushed with the hope of plunder. It seems as if the earth should gape and swallow up this inconsistency—this living foe to her fairness and whiteness; yet Rumbout hobbles along, knowing and dreaming none of these things. My vein in this sketch is episode on episode.

I love, in a clear summer afternoon, to glide up the East river in a light boat, and, dropping anchor near the classic regions of Hurlgate, partake the pleasant and contemplative joys of angling. Many such sunny hours have I spent, leaning over the boat's side, pretending to be on the watch for the finny prey, but, in truth, deep in a meditation on some bygone scene, or building up fairy palaces from the ooze below, and peopling them with fishlike nymphs, in half dresses—water-colored silks—with pretty round faces, and a train to their garments as long as a queen's. And every time that I have thus occupied my fancy, about the middle of my reverie I have heard the careful dash of an oar, the gentle dropping of a line in water, and looking up, have immediately beheld—Rumbout the ubiquitous.

He is never out of place. In crowds, look for Rumbout. Of processions, shows, wassailings, riots (in an innocent way), feastings, fastings, mobs, multitudes, he is a natural constituent. He has a face that becomes all these things, and, like the painter who wrought a hand, in which he was skilful, prominently into all his pictures, so Rumbout works in his picturesque visnomy upon the ground of these numberless exhibitions and diversions. I doubt much whether a street-organ ever sounded in our goodly city out of hearing of Rumbout. He

listens afar off, and soon hies to the spot. No band of musicians ever played in our thoroughfares if Rumbout were missing. He is the man that forms friendships with the drummer's boy, and takes liberties with the third flute-player! It is he that asked the captain of the Flying guards, "how much he paid a yard for the flannel in his coat?"—meaning his red uniform. No presence, however imposing—no authority, however grave or dignified, can awe down the spirit of the immortal negro. He has bearded the recorder in two petty larceny suits; and has threatened Mr. Hays (the ancient Hays) with a drubbing! Omnipresent, Rumbout seems also to be immortal. He has been called "Old Rumbout," I have been informed, since the year 1800: He is "Apollo—ever young." He has never looked younger than at present; he will never look older. The principles of life and youth seem to be rooted down deep in the constitution of Rumbout.

These plants seem to flourish best in that rich, black mould. Time can not pluck them up. He appears to have known but one season of life. Surly winter, sad autumn, capricious spring, have not visited him.

He is an incarnation and creature of the golden summer; gay with lowering clouds that seem more than they mean, prodigal, content, with fruit and blossom mingled; for Rumbout has never seen want yet. Like the great sun, in his favored season that we have spoken of, he works leisurely, making a long circuit in his labors—slowly, pleasantly, from the morning to the eve. I think Rumbout was educated a rag-gatherer. He goes through his vocation more as if it were an elegant recreation than a gainful mode of life. To appropriate the language of the studio, there is a delicacy in his touch, a mellowness and freedom in his style of handling, and a picturesqueness in his grouping, that render Rumbout the Raphael of his craft.

END OF MISCELLANIES.

SELECTIONS FROM ARCTURUS.





## SELECTIONS FROM ARCTURUS.

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[EIGHTEEN numbers of ARCTURUS—the monthly magazine from which these selections are made—were published in 1840, '1, '2, under the direction of the present author and Mr. EVERT A. DUYCKINCK. The author avails himself of this—the earliest opportunity that has offered—to acknowledge the advantage its conduct derived from the genial and graceful pen of this gentleman, suited so well to shed through the pages of a periodical a kindly light, and to make each corner glow with a sentiment dropped fresh from a fancy well-instructed.

Other and acceptable aid was furnished in various essays by Mr. WILLIAM A. JONES, truthful, acute, and vigorous, and equal, in the writer's humble judgment, to the best of their kind, at that time published in the United States. With Mr. AULD (little, but worthy to be greatly, known), unrolling month by month, an old, quaint tapestry, wrought with figures Rabelaisian and devices of the age of Secundus; and Mr. J. M. VANCOTT, a rising man at the bar of New York, coming in at the close, in a compact and well-ordered argument, the author would have left—as these were the mainstays and props of the undertaking—but few tributes to pay. Others stole upon its pages by degrees, in no unacceptable whisperings or utterances, but these were its key-notes, heard oftenest and not ungratefully by its readers. Their services were at least successful—it is well known—in awakening an answer to their thoughts in many places, and in calling forth the favor of the general press of the country.]

JULY 15, 1843.

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### POLITICAL LIFE.

THE American is called to play his part, whether it be cast in the higher or lower walks of life, amid many novelties of incident, situation, and emotion. It is true that as far as costume and many of the lesser appliances of character are concerned, he adjusts himself in an antique mirror, and is guided in the mere language of his part by the prompting-book of fashions and habits long in use and borrowed from abroad. At a distance he hears the conflict of many kingdoms—the tumult of great masses of men striving together in ancient combinations, and around him lie the wrecks of a world of humanity that has passed or is swiftly passing away. As far, however, as the inner life of the man is concerned, the fountains from which he draws his inspiration are fresh and new. The

sky above him is a new sky, the earth beneath him is a new earth, and the living influences and life-guiding institutions about him are new institutions and new influences. With him, custom hath lost its sway, and time and change are the champions against the field. His life is *not* "rounded with a sleep," but whirls perpetually through great diversities of accident and circumstance.

Humanity is here thrown back, as it were, upon its original elements, and is constrained to work out its destiny by native hardihood and internal force alone. Like the rivers of the land, its course, it seems to us, is through scenes of more than ordinary grandeur and beauty; mountain elevations, illimitable plains, and valleys quiet and serene. If it chooses, however, perversely to abandon the track of nature, and to seek channels of its own through baser soils—so be it, and with the workman rest the wages of his folly.

Along the way are scattered indications of his progress, and far onward we see steadily advancing messengers that bear tidings of the times that are at hand. Temporary in part, in part constant and abiding, are the signs that meet our eyes as we look abroad on the daily life, the growing customs, and the expanding character of the American people. Some of these shall pass away, because they are of the time, and some shall remain, durable as truth, because they are anchored in the permanent soul of man. From an inspection of the first, we shall gather amusement suited to the hour; from the more serious scrutiny of the last, we shall derive grave omens of the chances that await the generations yet to be.

Whether the aspects of Political Life, as it now unfolds itself in our Republic, in stations high and low, on fields broad and narrow, are to be held as belonging to the first or second of these classes, might be matter of question. With us they assume a double complexion; at times full of dignity and a certain naked and Roman simplicity; at others broadening into all that we can conceive of the ludicrous and grotesque. A noble senator standing on the platform of the nation in the honest performance of duty is to us an emblem of whatever is manly and imposing; a congress of three hundred deliberating on grand questions of polity, on the

armed defences of the country, on the commerce that has wings in every quarter of the earth, are in such moments the imbodied power, the living personation of twenty-six sovereign empires. Here we breathe the inspiring air of Alps and Allegany; we are in the high places of the earth. But if, on the other hand, we enter the public room of a city ward, and discover a worthy individual, some forty years of age, bowed double with congratulations as he makes progress through the throng of citizens; smiling upon faces that respond to him through squalor; tender in his inquiries after the health of babes and wives at home, of whose existence he has nothing more than a daring conjectural knowledge; then ascending a tub, barrel, or platform, as most convenient, tearing the air as if it were cambric muslin, and rending the ears of the assemblage with vociferations loud, false, or incoherent, as it may chance—we must confess we look upon a counterfeit presentment, from which every line of dignity, truth, and nobleness, have been happily blotted by the artist.

Political life has its turnpikes, its half-way houses, its highways and its by-ways; there is a political costume and a political dialect, and without some knowledge of the road, and skill in the employment of the appropriate dress and idiom, the poor wayfarer would find himself, in truth, in foreign parts, and travelling on a thoroughfare that literally leads to nothing. We propose, therefore, for the benefit of those gentlemen who admire but can not reach, as well as for the edification of such as decry but do not covet advancement in the state, to make an inquiry into the arts of the politician, or the game of government, as practised under our own window and within sound of our own church-bells.

In the first place, then, we must remark—in order to rescue ourselves from the charge of exaggeration, and our reader from the heinous sin of unbelief—that political life has a transforming power beyond any element we are acquainted with, except, perhaps, the water of stagnant ponds, which is said, by a quality inherent in and peculiar to its own ooze, to be capable of converting the silly and dull-coated tadpole into the wide-awake, well-dressed, and open mouthed bull-frog. Whether this legend be false or true, certain it is, that not only is the outward habit, organ, and feature of the politician changed by the atmosphere he breathes and the life he lives, but the very soul and faculties, the minutest springs and movements of the man are modified. His risings and settings, his gait and gesture, the cast of his eye and the grasp of his hand, his garments, his dwelling, his walks and his pauses, are not only regulated by the new spirit that has entered into him, but the pupil of the mind's eye itself becomes so enlarged or contracted that it imparts other and strange colors to whatever it contemplates. The moon, for example, is held by many painstaking and worthy people to be a round body

that dispenses light, and planetary in its character; now suppose a law to be enacted by an opposite party to veil the moon with blankets in order to arrest its action upon the tides, which it might be alleged is prejudicial to the interest of ferry-masters and fishermen; why, out marches our politician with a grave face and gives the whole hypothesis over to the devil by a bold assertion that the moon is a large Dutchess county cheese, and he can bring affidavit-men who were in at the churning. Rivers flow or stagnate, numbers constitute a riotous mob or a peaceful meeting of citizens, bullion is heavy or light, and bank-paper rags or money, according to the prevailing humor of the believer. An enactment, which in its plain recorded sections and sub-sections duly ordered, seemed to him, at the first glance, a law of most excellent and wholesome tendency, begins, as the truth grows upon him (after a brief and business-like conversation with the executive), to expand into a many-headed hydra that threatens to devour the union and all the little children, and the Lord knows what besides!

We will suppose our politician to have attained this useful facility of viewing the world and whatever it inherits of good, bad, or indifferent, through either end of the telescope; the first great lesson in his art is achieved.

His next business is attendance on public meetings and places of resort. Here he acquires the politician's vernacular, and becomes familiar with the features and voices of the leaders and orators of his party. His own countenance after a while comes to be known, and by keeping it constantly at red-heat, as if the fire of his zeal were unquenchable, he begins to be reckoned and recognised as a useful member of the faction. Now a little judicious fawning well-bestowed, a little activity opportunely displayed, and he will have emerged from the hedges and thickets in which he has been beating without a prospect of sport, and lo! he is on the avenue.

If not a blood-nag, he may, at least, prove himself a good draught-horse, kind in harness, and of most exceeding meekness and steadiness of gait. Without Romulus, Rome had not been built; without a patron, our politician can not ripen. He, therefore, becomes the factotum of some eminent manager; runs of errands from meeting to meeting, ward to ward, collecting small statistics, popular rumors, and tap-room gossip, and at one auspicious Sunday, tarries from church, and ventures to indite a handbill.

This elegant production (grander than the *Paradise Lost* in the eyes of its happy author), shines out for a fortnight or more the glory of walls, pumps, and fences, until washed into oblivion by the first pelting shower that falls. No matter, our aspiring gentleman is not dampened, for in the meantime he has had the felicity of being named as one of a committee of five to retire from one of the lesser assemblies of the ward, to draft resolutions "expressive of

the sense of the meeting." This is certainly one of the most trying tasks that could be imposed on the wit of man. Here has been a gathering of some two hundred individuals, who for more than an hour have had their noses in the direction of a sallow-faced gentleman, in dim spectacles, who has been stultifying them with a prescription compounded of one third newspaper, one third scripture illustration, and the balance general slang; and now, forsooth, as if it were the pleasantest thing in the world, five plain-witted gentlemen are detailed from the mass to express the "sense of the meeting," in twelve sonorous paragraphs, very appropriately headed "Resolutions," to denote the mortal agony and determination with which they were brought forth.

The next labor of the politician, and the next indication of his progress in the regards of his party, is the appointment to carry a conspicuous banner in a public procession. From this time forth he is acknowledged as a full lay-brother of the order, useful, zealous, and unflinching; although it must be confessed, that the banner-staff pressed with such force on the gastric region, on this first public trial, as to impair the poor man's digestion for more than a week. Unflinching, did we say? Wo betide the poor rascal if he should draw back or betray the slightest symptom of reluctance, though he were called on to swallow a provision bag lined with Jack Cade, Tom Paine, and the immortal Pantagruel himself. Pleasanter employment is, however, just now furnished for his appetite, for, as a particular favor, he is endowed by one of his patronising friends, with a ticket of admission to a grand barbecue or festival, and there it is that he takes another step in political life, and offers a volunteer toast, in his own name.

He may now be regarded as a public man, but the emphatic seal is not yet stamped on his character, until a certain eventful evening arrives. On this occasion there chances to be a thin attendance at the ward meeting; the candles burn low; the older speakers have been called for, but called in vain; when a small, round man, with a face as pale as ashes, is seen struggling through the crowd at one corner of the room. To the astonishment, the utter and entire petrification of almost every man in the audience, he makes his way to the platform, dismisses his hat, and ascends, and as true as water flows and working-beams vibrate, he stretches out his arm and begins to deliver a speech; an actual speech, full of live similes, earthquakes, battles, banners, and tornadoes, not to mention a mixed metaphor of a leviathan, or some such monster, riding through the land, like the illustrious Lafayette, in a triumphal barouche.

At the conclusion of this effort, the meeting very rationally considering that the orator has had his turn, try their own lungs in three overwhelming cheers, every one of which sounds, in the ears of our politician, like the general

shout of a nation of freemen, hailing their deliverer.

The full glory of his career now breaks upon him; there is nothing which he can not achieve by the power of his eloquence; he has but to lift up his voice, and the highest station heart could desire is his. In the meantime, however, to keep in practice, and to prevent his oratory from running to waste, he is despatched into New Jersey or Connecticut, during a warmly-contested election, to cheer up the hearts of the faithful; and since the last comet, no such luminary has crossed their horizon, dashing hither and thither, brandishing his arms aloft, and shouting "Freedom," at the top of his lungs, as if he expected to produce by the clamor an actual aerial descent of the goddess from the clouds for the express purpose of carrying the then pending contest.

Who can deny services like these or doubt their value? The period has at length arrived for rewarding this assiduous and laborious member of the party. He has plied his cane at public meetings, he has supported banners, he has contrived handbills and penned resolutions, he has spoken, he has shouted in the cause, and he is made an alderman!

Ubiquity has now become an important attribute of our political Hercules. He must be seen everywhere; heard of everywhere; must be known as a getter-up of theatrical benefits and charity balls, and a puller-down of public abuses and overgrown monopolies. At steam-boat landings, at the departure of packets, on all festival occasions, whether Hibernian fiddlings, or steamship entertainments, he must be there; like Dr. Faustus, the fiend would tear him if he failed the hour. He staggers under a pressure of engagements, and seems laboring with some spasmodic affection, which perpetually lifts his right arm and contracts the fingers of the hand corresponding to the grasp of salutation.

In this way his voice becomes at length as familiar as the toll of the town-clock; his person is recognised like the town-hall itself, and the poor man's hand is as much "frequented" as the open thoroughfare of the same. This accomplishes his purpose; his name is known and talked of, and although in these innumerable places he has never said nor done one memorable thing or single act, that, taken by itself, would be considered of the slightest moment, yet so thoroughly are the public blinded by this perpetual whirl and motion, appearance and reappearance, in the form of toast or sentiment, song, speech, or resolution, that this empty-pated puff-ball, is, in the course of time, regarded as an able, popular, and influential character.

With ubiquity, assurance, broad-faced, boundless, and invincible, is a necessary attendant. How meek a man is our juggler! How patiently he bears all the burdens men can lay upon him! With how swift an assumption does he accept the utmost duties that can be imposed!

No matter how arduous, how high, how low, how deep the labor that is suggested, he will undertake it all. On all committees, whether financial, military, civil, or charitable, you can not balk him. That problem in alms-giving, in science, literature, or gastronomy, can not be contrived so tough that he will not solve it. He would gravely set about squaring a circle, or calculating the longitude, if called upon, without for a moment entertaining the thought of advancing his own want of knowledge or fitness as a reasonable plea for declining to act. No! no! all is fish that comes to his net, and goes to make up the grand chowder of his political reputation. What matters it to him whether he makes his progress by a fair, straight-forward, honest head-wind, or if his sail catches every little trifling flaw, side-current, and gust of air—though he be constantly required to shift the helm, to veer, to tack, to beat up and down, to box the compass, to ride on the “hog’s back,” to divide “hen and chickens,” as long as he can keep from the perdition of the “Frying Pan!”

It is now, for a time, a question whether this man shall continue to rise in his profession, or whether he is doomed to linger in a dull and tedious mediocrity for the remainder of his natural life; in other words, whether he shall be allowed to play the demagogue and people’s man on a large scale, or whether he is to be confined entirely to the purloins of the city, the arena of the taproom and porterhouse.

At first, we think we discover in him a downward tendency; but look again, and lo! the creature is as busy as a polypus in summer, stretching out a hand here and a hand there, and still another there, and so effectually devoting his office and his leisure to his own purposes, that he has no sooner ceased to be an alderman for the city, than he has become a member of congress for the nation; at which, it is true, his simple-minded old friends in the country are vastly astonished, never dreaming that the man “had it in him,” and ignorant as their own unshorn lambs of the machinery by which the deficiency of natural organs was ingeniously supplied.

He has now attained an age and station which requires that some extraordinary development of his greatness should be made. Shall it exhibit itself in the shape of a “Dinner to Mr. Whiff”—the presentation of “two silver goblets and a punch apparatus,” or shall it come in the more imposing form of a “visit” to the northern, southern, or western states, as it may happen?

The select friends of the great man—in other words, the proprietors of Mr. Whiff, the politician, in fee-simple, and who take upon themselves to play off the puppet for such purposes as they may think convenient and proper—have fixed, we will suppose, upon the “visit,” as affording material of the most comprehensive kind. Now the trumpets begin to blow; banners are unfurled, and by dint of skilful para-

graphs and the assumption of an immense interest in the slightest movements of Mr. Whiff, on the part of certain operatives or “wire-workers,” the nation, or a considerable portion of it, is thrown into a state of intense and most uncomfortable excitement. It is announced, with the utmost solemnity, in a morning paper, that Mr. Whiff lodged the night before last in Tompkinsville; and such was the anxiety to get a glimpse of his person and listen to his well-known eloquence, that the large room of the largest public house was converted into lodgings to furnish accommodations for the thousands, who retired to their couches highly delighted and soothed by the effects of his oratory!

The afternoon journal, not to be outdone in this grand overture of trumpets, makes its appearance with a chubby news-boy at the head of its columns, waving a fragment of pocket-handkerchief, with “Postscript!” worked on in large type, and divulges the astounding fact, that “just as our informant was leaving, Mr. Whiff had put his foot on board the ‘Adeline Elmira,’ for the purpose of crossing Smith’s Ferry for Tomtown, on the other side, which he was expected to reach in about twenty minutes from the time of embarkation!”

Thus by devoting a daily column to the sayings and doings of Mr. Whiff, and by emphasizing his most trifling acts and adventures, the blood of the populace is set on fire, and at last Mr. Whiff arrives. Here is a pretty tumult! A compact mob, like another Argus, apparently all eyes, presses toward the wharf, and the very moment the great man lands, he is snatched from his feet and hurried into an open carriage, about which another crowd is gathered to stare at the illustrious, just escaped, as it were out of the belly of the sea-monster at the landing.

Now ensues a scene in which the politician plays the leading character, with a swarm of citizens at his skirts by way of supernumeraries and subordinates. Mr. Peter Whiff, standing erect in his carriage (with a tail dragging behind of which the joints are hacks, coaches, light wagons, sulkeys, and milk-carts), advances through the main streets, bowing graciously to such heads and faces as may present themselves from balconies, house-tops, and areas. On floats the triumphal procession, and sundry little short-legged gentlemen make it their business to ply their paddles ahead of the carriage of Mr. Whiff, and to cast frequent glances of profound reverence and enthusiasm toward the person of that distinguished gentleman. An old lady, a devout admirer of great men, stands against the park railing, with a pocket-glass at her eye surveying the outlines of Mr. Whiff’s person, and satisfying herself of the actual outward dimensions of that wonderful individual—of whom she has heard so much, and knows so little.

Every now and then as he passes, some window, some roof, or church vestibule, goes into a spasm, the most marked symptoms of which

are a violent waving of black beaver hats, and a deep guttural noise, emitted from the throat. Meantime the hero takes snuff and waves his pocket-handkerchief enchantingly, relieving himself at times, however, by sustaining his coat-skirts by the aid of his two hands thrust underneath the same; about this posture there is always an air of coolness and dignity which has its effect with the populace. He at length reaches the public house, his destined quarters; is hurried up the steps, thrust out of a window, and although the poor man's throat is almost a turnpike of dust, and his lungs in scarcely better condition than a blacksmith's bellows out of use for a twelvemonth, he must make a speech.

At the conclusion another ecstasy pervades the mob; the great man withdraws, is fed, watered, and put to bed, like the great South American Lama. The next day he is roused at daylight, or thereabout, by a committee of citizens, and from that moment till the going down of the sun he is put steadily to the pleasant torture of having his whole body shaken, his joints disturbed, and his tongue unhinged, by incessant gaspings, welcomes, and salutations. A second day he is transported from place to place, halls of science, town halls, lecture rooms, repositories, theatres, and public buildings, squares, wharfs, and cemeteries, until he almost covets a snug property in one of the last, where he would doubtless lie very quiet and easy, unless there happened to be a "wire-worker," or committee-man, in the next grave. A third day, and there is no pause; a new round of objects demands his attention, the neighboring villages, the almshouse, penitentiaries, and what not, are to be visited; and visited they are, and at each and every of these Mr. Whiff disembogues a speech: in fact, wherever he goes, like a public fountain, he is one ceaseless spout, spout, spout! and like that too, whatever he utters falls back into the original basin, and is redelivered over and over again.

The public sympathies have by this time been taxed to the utmost, and the capabilities of Mr. Whiff's constitution so thoroughly tested, that "his duties at Washington," or "urgent business at home," calls him away, and the town is again allowed to relapse into a comparatively calm and temperate condition. The rocket has exploded; we have seen all the brilliancy it could display, and can afford to be content until the state pyrotechnists shall be pleased to "let off" another.

We have thus compounded the character of a politician by the synthetic process; and now, in pursuance of the more ordinary line of our duty, let us for a moment apply the analytical, and take in pieces the puppet we have constructed—in order that we may learn what proportion the wood, hay, and stubble, bear to each other in the machine, and also by what springs it is set in motion.

What then do we discover?

In the first place, a radical unfitness in the man for the part he has assumed; an entire unconsciousness of the requirements and duties of the character. In him we discern no primal sympathy with mankind, which urges him into the vocation; no strong, stern sense of the wants, capacities, and rights, of the race whose champion he proposes to enact. What to him are the people? Painted faces, shadows, automata—anything rather than beings full to overflowing, of passions, sensibilities, convictions—creatures with hearts in their bosoms, and heads whose only deficiency lies in an inability to discern the nothingness of such as pretend to serve and guide them.

With this moral incapacity, exists an intellectual one quite as broad and startling. Past ages have not been his study; Sidney nor Adams, nor the constellation that lives and shines in history, have furnished for him the lustre in which great minds love to walk and meditate. What knows he of the past? The utmost retrospection of his memory is to the date of some war, some junto or coalition, which shall serve him as a topic of partisan declamation. Of the present? Not the spirit that moves and animates the masses of mankind, and makes itself visible and audible in amended charters, reclaimed rights, and disfranchised despotisms. No! with him the chronicle of the hour is sufficient for the hour.

The nearest gazette can instruct him in the latest party triumph; in the proceedings of the last grand convention, assembled to nominate some cipher or other to an office of trust and authority; and teach him to calculate the chances of obtaining a snug sinecure in the event of his election. While others are battling and dying under the true flag of their country for the privileges of men, he prefers to march in some street-procession, under a more peaceful, a less perilous emblem.

We would not have him fight; but we would have him enter upon the business of statesman and legislator with a knowledge, a feeling knowledge, of the great sacrifices others are elsewhere making to achieve rights and institutions which he is called on to perpetuate and secure. We would have him consecrate himself to the service of the state by a baptism nobler than that of the brewhouse; by a life including less effort to drown the divine calling of the patriot in the clamor of trumpets, the roll of vacant drums, and the idle shouts of multitudes.

Again, this man's little regard for the people is shown in the peculiar mode of progression which he adopts. Instead of being advanced by the spontaneous popular will, he moves forward on a frame-work of caucuses and committees, on which he stands as dexterously balanced as the best posture-master of them all. He does not fight his battles in the naked and real strength of the popular cause, but prefers to wage a war of junto with junto; to plot and counterplot in committee, and to represent the

mass, in all his political movements, by a figure of speech. The result is as might be expected; he moves up this wooden staircase, precarious scaffolding, step by step, and, from a mere groundling, comes in time to be master of the house, without a solitary tittle to justify his occupancy; without, in fact, the real regards of the nation. But wo betide him, if one day a blast should arise when he thinks not, and, rushing against the frail fabric of his fortunes, sweep them away into utter and irreversible oblivion.

The selfish insincerity of this character is again betrayed in the false and sounding style of his declamation. His oratory is vague, hollow, and purposeless; full of tropes, figures, and apostrophes, but wanting in genuine earnestness and truth. He is the noisiest of the worshippers, but he is not on that account more of a believer in the worship. Instead of the plain, manly directness which becomes one who is uttering truths deep as life, and on which much of the happiness of life depends, he converts his discourse into a sort of operatic rehearsal, in which all the quavers, flourishes, and variations of the language, are attempted. Or, on the other hand, he bursts upon us in a tropical exuberance of flowers, sun-beams, and prattling waters; concluding, perhaps, with a terrific tornado, or volcanic outbreak. His heart is not there, and all that he conjures up is fantastical, unreal, and out of place. His written productions partake of the same grand element of insincerity; they are loud, sonorous, and empty; full of Johnsonian gravity and indigenuous no-meaning.

Another pernicious ingredient in the politician we have attempted to delineate, is a hunger and thirst for office; not a desire to hold office because office must be held, or from an absolute avarice of the emoluments of place, but a passion for office for the sake of office, an affection for the petty consequence, the brief authority, with which it is clothed by his own imagination, and the misjudging people by whom he is surrounded.

The holders of office resemble, in our humble judgment, the holders of the carriage box-seat; exalted above us, it is true; endowed with certain badges of authority, the whip, reins, and coachman's hat; but acting throughout in our behalf, and for our convenience, although certain dullards along the road may choose to regard them as the very miracles and patterns of humanity, the envy of taverns, the glory of bar-rooms, the wonder and delight of large public-houses.

These gentlemen seem to regard themselves as enjoying an exclusive prescriptive right to places of trust and profit; and we are almost satisfied that anatomical investigation would discover a conformation of body peculiarly suited to the occupancy of aldermen's chairs and clerk's cushions.

It is a fact that will bear scrutiny, we think, that there are thousands in the United States

who prefer the wages of office to the rewards of regular industry, and who would render twice the amount of labor for one dollar of government pay, which would be required to produce the same return in the ordinary course of trade. They feel that they are resting under the shadow of the government wings; that, let what will happen, the quarter's salary will arrive in due season, and that their sole responsibility and duty are to toil blindly on, heeding nothing, anxious for nothing but the predominance of the party-planet that sustains them in their place.

To do justice, however, to the character we have described, it must be confessed that there is less of this greed for salary than might be expected; though he does not fail, in the long run to discover some Pactolian stream that can be diverted into his own treasury, in the shape of perquisite, commission on avenues, or other honorary job. He, therefore, like others, at last associates office with the happiest incidents of his life. The setting up of a new carriage from the proceeds, the erection of a more stylish dwelling-house, or the giving of his first grand entertainment, with new brass lamps, and mulatto waiters to match.

To all these radical errors and deficiencies is to be added another circumstance of some moment. The multiplicity of objects in which he is obliged to feel or feign an interest, and the diversities of character he is expected to sympathize with, as a man of the people, tend to dissipate the elements of his own natural character, and to destroy its original bias. No single feeling in his breast, no faculty or quality, save an all-absorbing tact, has time to ripen or mature, and his whole nature is overrun with a growth of noxious, distorted, and unwholesome objects. A few of the primary instincts may maintain their place, but the integrity, the truth and beauty, which belong to a nature nobly and courageously developed, are not there.

Better would it have been for him had he devoted his life to the contrivance of a mill-wheel, or the production of a single excellent specimen of timothy or asparagus; for then there would have been something like honesty in the man, an enthusiasm true and unaffected, and a vein of thought which might have been relied on as genuine and pure.

Forgetting entirely the claims of nature and the commands of conscience, he leads a life of manœuvre, duplicity, and stratagem. He is the slave of time and chance. An error of salutation; a solecism of opinion; a single false step in the grand train of political plotting, frights him more than the bugbears of conscience or the alarms of reason. He lives in a wheel of destiny, where a moment's pause, a hair-breadth deviation, would destroy him. He has leased out his life to clowns and quidnuncs, and he has no more choice of action or locomotion than the sultan surrounded by a troop of bloody-minded janissaries. His life is therefore false, hollow, and servile. There is sufficient of ex-



ternal gilding to dazzle the multitude, and to achieve mere worldly success; but the heart is wiser than the head, and there he fails. After all, the world and the world's affections are not with him. He serves a purpose; he can ride his stage like the sorriest hackney of them all; and then he is taken from the harness and succeeded by a jade as poor and wretched, but just as serviceable. In time he may live to be turned upon the common, and when his hour arrives he drops into a cold, cheerless, and unapplauded grave.

The true statesman, with nature's stamp of supremacy on every action, ascends from the midst of the people by slow degrees, and attains his zenith of power and splendor through a long tract of diligent and steady labor.

He begins with no ostentatious parade of banners or bustle of zeal in the popular cause. He plants his first steps on the foundation-principles of government; reaches forth his arms to such branches and buttresses as history and humanity may furnish; and, by a slow progress, succeeds at last in scaling a height from which he may look forth on the kingdoms of the earth, and learn how the world is governed. In this pursuit no petty spirit of partisanship is engendered; the small pomp of personal consequence is abashed.

Deaf to the idle tumult of the hour, he hears the loud cry of despairing nations; the voices of the prison-house; the sundering of fetters, strong as death; the eager welcome of dawning light; and, as God is with them, the shout of enfranchisement and deliverance. His soul shoots along the axis of the earth, to the north and to the south, and either ocean only arrests its eager sympathies.

But are the interests of his own day and nation forgotten in this wide survey of past and present? No; rather remembered the more, and served the more truly. From a mind pregnant with whatever other times and other people have done or suffered in the great cause of human happiness, spring the guarded rights, the enlightened welfare, of the country that he calls his own. The fiercer the assault, the more secret the breach made elsewhere against the immunities of mankind, the steadier the defence, the more sagacious the protection of the same privileges at home. On all occasions, on every imminent emergency, he is prepared to justify the principles of his faith, and to give a new sanction to the institutions under which he dwells. He lives in the eye of Truth and Liberty. He shall descend to his grave with the tears and blessings of mankind.

#### MR. JAMES GRANT.\*

MR. JAMES GRANT, the celebrated British author, stands about five-feet-three in his

\* Portraits of Public Characters. By the author of "The Great Metropolis;" "Random Recollections of the Lords and Commons," &c., &c. Saunders & Otley: London, 1840.

stockings; on reflection, we should perhaps say five-feet-four. His breadth across the shoulders is not more than ordinary; but we trust we shall not be regarded as trespassing on delicacy, in making known a fact of considerable importance, namely, that he has a singularly well-developed pair of legs. We are not aware that Mr. Grant has ever been esteemed by anybody as, strictly speaking, a colossus; but, as will be observed from the remark we have just made, his claims to be regarded as such are by no means slight. The story, therefore, of Mr. Grant's having kicked an Irish porter through one of the upper windows of Westminster Abbey, although needing confirmation, is physiologically possible.

Mr. Grant commenced life, as we are informed—having no personal knowledge of this fact, we can not be so positive in the statement as we might otherwise have been—as a tapster at the Cock and Bull, Cheapside; from which situation he rose, in due course of time, to be head waiter at the Gas and Bellows, Strand; and finally, having been discovered one day by the editor of one of the leading London journals, writing out an account of a fight between the barmaid and cook of the Bellows, on one of the parlor-windows with a magnificent quartz crystal, he was immediately taken into service as a reporter, and employed to furnish nightly descriptions of the various rencontres in the house of lords, between honorable gentlemen on the subject of the Reform bill. We unfortunately have it not in our power to state at this moment whether he occupied a place in the left-hand gallery, to the right of the speaker's chair, or on the left hand of the speaker, in the right gallery; our impression is it was the left-right. A curious story is told illustrative of this part of Mr. Grant's career, which, although not of the slightest earthly importance, may be worth repeating here. It is said that a pet donkey belonging to a coalheaver in a neighboring street, was in the habit of watching the messenger who was sent from the office of the journal in question, to receive such supplies of the night's reports as Mr. Grant might be prepared to furnish. Just as he turned the corner leading to the door of St. Stephen's, the donkey, fixing his eye steadily on the editor's messenger, would start off at a smart gallop, and, as a matter of course, reach the door several seconds before the messenger, and would immediately commence setting up a portentous bray, as if to give notice to Mr. Grant that more "copy," as it is technically styled, was needed. This summons, we need hardly add, Mr. Grant at all times cheerfully answered; coming out at each call with a large roll of manuscript report, and placing it smilingly in the messenger's hand.

With regard to Mr. Grant's personal habits, we have it fortunately in our power to be very particular. In the morning, having first washed, shaved, and breakfasted, he grasps his cane and sallies forth; his first call is on the valet



of his Grace the Duke of Wellington, and, having ascertained to his entire satisfaction that his Grace had a tranquil night of it, that he has already risen, and is engaged in answering his correspondents in a blue dimity morning-gown, Mr. Grant bids the valet good-morning, and descends the steps. His next business is to trip up a one-legged beggar, and while apologizing for the accident, and administering alms, he draws from him an accurate account of the various impostures practised by the metropolitan mendicants on the unwary, by the way of forged letters, calls on behalf of the daughters of deceased naval officers, and applications for the relief of sick widows with seven small children, of which two are always at the breast. Mr. Grant then, in all probability, takes a pot of small-beer at the nearest tavern; and seeing just at that moment the coach of Lord Brougham entering town, with a vacant place on the box, he invites himself to a ride, and, ascending by means of the ordinary leather straps, he takes a seat by the side of his lordship's coachman, and enters into a very pleasant gossiping conversation with that functionary, in the course of which he learns a vast deal about the characteristic habits of his lordship; among others, a peculiarity his lordship has of winking at his footman when off duty, and of indulging himself in throwing miraculous somersets backward and forward over the top of the coach, whenever it has occasion to stand still for more than a couple of minutes at a time. Before leaving his elevated friend, Mr. Grant probably extorts from him a promise that if his lordship should chance to drop a wig in the course of any of these surprising gymnastic exercises, to bring it straightway to him at the office of the London Journal, of which Mr. Grant is editor, and receive half-a-crown for his pains.

But Sunday is by all odds the busiest day with Mr. Grant. From morning till night he is on the move; popping his head in at Mr. Croly's church in time to hear that distinguished orator announce his text; hurrying away to hear Mr. Fox, the Unitarian clergyman's, firstly; the Rev. Mr. Melvill's, secondly or thirdly; the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel's, fourthly; and so on through all the divines of the metropolis. It is said there is not a man in London who performs a more laborious sabbath-day's work than Mr. Grant, including even the clergymen who preach three times, and the gentlemen who sing base in the various metropolitan churches.

By the way, we should not forget to mention here that this gentleman is the author of "Random Recollections of the House of Lords," in 1 vol., post octavo; "Random do. Commons," do., do.; two series of "The Great Metropolis," two vols. each; "The Metropolitan Pulpit," in we forget how many volumes; "Sketches of London," 1 vol., octavo, with cuts; and

some other works, one of which, "Portraits of Public Characters," in 2 vols., is, we believe, just out. It is not positively known whether Mr. Grant has ever written poetry (these works being all in prose), but, it is supposed, if he should ever undertake poetry, it would be his object to rival Sir Richard Blackmore; and by many it is considered, should he make the attempt, that he would be successful.

The intellectual characteristics of Mr. Grant are easily made out. His style, although, perhaps, it can not be said to be equal to that of Mr. Jeffrey or the Hon. Babington Macaulay, in brilliancy, is certainly one of the most remarkable of the present day. There seems to be in this distinguished gentleman's mind, if we may venture upon so bold a phrase, a sort of circumambieny, which leads him to beat about his subject, keeping, in the meantime, at a due distance from it; much, as our readers may have observed, as one of the horses on sale at Tattersall's dances round the jockey, who holds a rein and whip in his hand, looking at him with great earnestness and gravity, but taking heed, meanwhile, to keep very respectfully out of his reach. That this is owing to a peculiar conformation of intellect on the part of Mr. Grant, we are satisfied; but nothing could be happier than this singular style for the class of subjects he has chosen, being chiefly distinguished statesmen, mighty divines, and gigantic bibliopoles; to use a significant phrase which Mr. Hume occasionally employs in the course of one of his economical speeches, "It's just the thing."

Nothing could be more artful than Mr. Grant's narrative of what he has seen; and we are satisfied if it should ever be his good or evil fortune to meet with a dog Cerberus, we should immediately have three graphic biographies from his pen, one for each head; and the same of a hundred-headed hydra, if he should happen to fall in with one; a life for each head, or one tremendous life in a hundred volumes. Mr. Grant's pictures are all full-lengths; and although he can not be said to be strictly rhetorical in his manner, yet there are very few divines who can equal him in subdivisions, in dwelling skilfully on a topic, and in going back to it after it is entirely exhausted. In fact, we are pretty well convinced, although we have no positive information on the subject, unless our moral conviction that such is the case can be so considered, that Mr. Grant's habits of writing are like those of our countryman, Mr. Willis, whom he describes in his latest production as follows: "He does not take nor require time to think, when engaged in his literary avocations. Ideas crowd so fast upon him, his perception of the best points in his subjects is so ready, that the moment he takes his pen in hand he starts off at a railroad-rate, and never slackens his pace until he becomes physically exhausted."

## THE SOLEMN VENDUE.

MR. ABRAHAM SABLE was in town a short time since, for the purpose of selling a few vaults in Christ church churchyard, Tarrytown. There is "snug lying" there, I will warrant, almost as snug as in the abbey, and our melancholy-minded friend did well to bring them to the New York market, where purchasers must be found, if anywhere. Think but of those who want graves, and you will know whether there should be bidders for his commodity. First, there are all the weary, whose hope in life has perished; the suiter that sought love, and found tears, anguish, dark, dreary nights, and long, melancholy, purposeless days; the friend, whose close companion of many dear, dear hours, has fallen from him with a cold look, and unforgiving eye, and a hand close shut to his expectant grasp, like stone; the merchant, whose last ship has gone down, far off, with all her freightage in the cruel Indian ocean; and the poor lone mother, whose only son sunk in that same ship, in the gloomy sea, and whose heart begins to break over the thought that her home is desolate for ever. Here is a desire for graves!

There are other chapmen for the occasion; the poor politician, by whom opportunity has swept and left him on the shore, officeless, remorseful, moping evermore, with hands thrust in his pockets, and eyes that wander from face to face bereft of the old smile, the urgent greeting look, that begged for a remembrance at the November ides.

There is another who would seek his grave as familiarly as his own chamber in the night, who would make his couch there as cheerfully as under his own roof-tree, one who would stretch in the dark shadow of the vault, as readily as under the canopy of a green tree, or a bright cloud in summer; for him whose fair renown is soiled and mildewed to the world—for him a cheap family-vault would be a home-stead, indeed, a quiet retiring-room, into which he could step and fall asleep from the slanders and evil tongues of men. Bid high for the grave! for it is a desirable property, a habitation that can shelter us from the harshest storm that ever yet blew over the earth. Let us buy graves early! for he that dies without this great provision is poor—poorer than the neediest beggar, and must have the last charity dealt to him, the mightiest. But who shall sell graves? Who is powerful enough to deal in this wonderful ware—this concluding and imperishable merchandise? It seems as if an angel, and no inferior one, should descend in our midst and put to sale this great commodity.

"Who bids? Who bids, for this fine vault, with accommodations complete—dug in the choicest clay, with eight steps descending, and a warranted door of iron? Comfortable tenement, secure, silent, and rare. No arrest, no service of process, can come there. No judge's voice, no marshal's truncheon, no oppressor's rod. Who bids? who bids? You of the slip-

pered shank and hollow cheek—it is yours—for you have already taken possession with one foot planted on your new estate. Another, larger, ampler, more spacious—for a more commodious tenant. Apoplectic mortal! I have your bid—it is a good one, and well thought of, for next week you shall enter upon your purchase. A third! Why do you draw back? Will none in this great crowd try for a third? Ah! there is a modest chapman: pale, thought-sick youth—you must drop, drop with others, and elders—this measures you to an inch, and the deed will be made out to-morrow, before the sun sets."

This would be an attentive auditory, I think, a respectful and silent throng of purchasers, and the competition wondrously timid and accommodating. Neighbor would nod off the bargain from his own head to neighbor, and the solemn salesman would lift up his voice alone in the streets of Babel.

There is also a choice of graves. Who bids? who bids? Here is a damp, cold vault, laid in a hard soil, with perpetual drops oozing through upon the coffin; lay there the dull-hearted miser, in whose breast no kindly affection took root, and where hope, charity, love of neighbors, kindred, and children, withered away in the chill region of self-seeking and love of gain.

Yonder the spade has done its work in a cheerful slope, on which the sun smiles through three quarters of the long summer day; it is a fitting burial-place for the good man, whose eye, like this pleasant upland, loved to look forth on scenes of peace, quietness, and content, and to lend to them a new beauty and joy borrowed from itself.

Here, where the grave strikes deep amid the gnarled roots of this great oak forest, that contends manfully with wind and tempest, and holds stout fast of the earth, hither bring the bier of the towering son of power, whose renown was immovably established, and whose fair head lifted itself high up toward heaven without fear, or rather, with great rejoicing and delight. Under this evergreen turf, crowned with early flowers in spring, with long-lingering snowdrops in the ungenial time, the great river ever murmuring by, and the distant mountain stretching its shadow over the water till it falls on this selected spot of earth, here lay the poet, in the midst of glorious sights and sounds and odors, of which he is a part now, and was once a partaker.

Who shall have this grave? Who bids? Who bids for a sepulchre that frowns upon us fearfully like this? Adders' nests, newts, and ground-moles beneath—long, hoary, moss-clad trunks midway—sombre birds of omen, the evil-boding crow, and the grim, selfish owl, above: who seeks to lie there? Ah! it is that black-haired man, with blood-spots on his wrist, and an unquiet devil in his eye; it is his; and he longs for it, for he is a murderer that cowers and trembles in the broad face of light. Hurry

him to his grave, and bless him. Be quick with the obsequies, for he gasps in the pure air of day. Tarry not; for Jesus' sake tarry not with tressels and biers, sable hangings and hearses, for he yearns for his couch, as the child yearns for his cradle, or the wild beast pants for its den. Hide him! hide him swiftly in the earth!—going, gone! That bid passed like an arrow, and a readier chapman one could not desire.

Whom shall we lay here, in this desolate chamber, built in a blasted soil, on the banks of a dry channel, over which withered trees stretch their dead arms, and in the top of one of them lies the skeleton of an eagle, with his wings drooping over the sides of his nest, struck dead by irresistible lightning? Whose grave is this? Thine, old Indian chief! Apparel his heroic old corse in its feathers, its buffalorobe, and its wampum-belt, and lay it down in this region of gloom and barrenness; a kindred home for a kindred spirit.

This is a sweet tomb in this delicious vale, smothered, as it were, in excess of roses, violets, and golden buttercups; a gentle wind sighs along its roof and makes apt music for the slumbering tenant beneath. Birds of pleasant plumage and tender song haunt here, and a field-lark hath built its emblematic nest (from which it soars so steadily and cheerfully to heaven) at the very mouth of the grave. A choice tenant must inhabit so choice a tomb. It is that pale maiden, on whose cheek a faint bloom lingers amid a fast triumphing paleness, as a little tinge of summer colors, oftentimes, the icy skirt of February, retreating and returning ever and anon. Lay that gentle lady gently down! She was deserted in her prime, and carries a broken heart, meekly and mildly, to her appointed home.

Far beyond, where poison henbane, and hemlock, and deadly aconite, with creepers of noxious quality—just where that skull of a copper-snake peeps from the earth, find a suitable burial for witch and sorceress, and compounder of fatal drugs. The adder will creep to her grave, and the black raven flap his wings over it in triumph, for powers of evil, whether of water or air, are kinsfolk and connexions.

Bury the boatman by the shore, and the astronomer on the mountain; the warrior lay by the side of the cataract, whose din mimics a mighty battle, the clashing of shields, the braying of trumpets, and the shock of foaming carnage.

For the sons of doubt, whose lives were swift and dark with turbid thoughts, find a sepulture on the banks of gloomy currents that have their well-springs in cold, icy hills, and their ending in wide, illimitable, restless seas.

Bury the quiet man in valleys, and the children of strife in the storm-swept plain, or in the heart of cities, where they shall be trampled on by friend and enemy, and have no quiet nor rest even in the grave.

Bury children in gardens and scented or-

chards; aged people and grandsires, in lone woods, to which their age is kindred; and on the heirs of fame, the kindlers of high thoughts, friends of the oppressed, deliverers of nations, bestow the whole wide earth, with its mountains and valleys, lakes and running streams, and echoing cliffs, as a tomb, a monument, and a memorial.

## CITIZENSHIP.

THE colossal event of October was the explosion of the grand political fraud-mine\* at the almshouse in the presence of his honor the Recorder, and the city District Attorney. No incident of the kind has, within our memory, created so general and earnest a commotion among the members of all parties, as well as among the community of less excitable citizens, who belong to none. Whether this was a high court of preliminary inquiry, convened for great and solemn purposes; or whether it was a mere congress and junto of partisans for sinister objects, we shall not inquire.

Certain leading questions of less doubtful character have become involved in the chief subject, and of these we shall speak freely, and as every right-minded American would desire to have us speak.

The first, and most striking, is the evidence this case furnishes of the readiness of the community to fall off into parties and party divisions on any matter that may be presented. Now, as we humbly regard it, neither party is to be considered as the exclusive friend and champion of truth. As far as our humble observation extends, neither is to be held as the immaculate and single advocate of justice. Goodness and right do not inhabit so clearly on this or that side of an accurate, straight line, drawn by party wisdom or party honor. Oh no! Truth is diffused more like the atmosphere, and pervading all regions and things, preserves the general soundness and purity of the world; it does not lie heaped up in masses, or gathered in overwhelming treasures within the camp of any chieftain or company of political knights-errant. The strong, wholesale clamor, therefore, for or against any measure or act, is unwise and false to a sound general principle; a qualified and restrained advocacy or opposition lurks in the constitution of mankind, and in the very nature of things.

Party divisions, can not, and, perhaps, should not be abolished; but there must arise in the progress of events, questions far above all such sectarian and narrow feelings; questions affecting the foundation of government, and the very stability of all institutions. The purity of elections is with us just such a question, and demands a generous abandonment of party

\* The introduction of voters from Philadelphia at the election in New York, in large numbers, and by contract.

views, and a bold and prompt declaration in behalf of good principle, wherever it may show itself. A clear, integral, unquestionable expression of the popular will and meaning, is with the present frame of government to be desired, furthered, prayed for above all civil blessings. Let the nation speak out; and accursed be he that counterfeits, intercepts, or misinterprets its true manly tones. Be a brand indelible as life upon him that lends himself forthright, or by indirection, to corrupt the great franchise. Let him stand in the midst of the community, like the first murderer, as one who would strike at the life of first principles, the scoff, the utter contempt and loathing of all men. On his tomb be inscribed the national malediction in the bitterest and briefest words that national wisdom and indignation can frame! Let no man who regards his own fair fame, or the fair fame and tranquillity of his children, palter with this Abaddon of political life; and, on the other hand, let no ready accuser or convenient judge lay the charge of such countenance lightly on any man's head! Nor let a considerate and all-accomplishing people, urge on or assuage the clamor further than the strictest ends of true justice require.

Resolution and prudence should be our counsel in such emergencies; and, judging with tranquillity, we should condemn and punish with terrible directness.

Regarding a single incident of citizenship—a great and noble incident it is true—with these feelings, we can not but regard citizenship itself as a high privilege, and one which should not be frivolously conferred or assumed. To be an American citizen is to be a free man, not merely as far as bonds and captivity are concerned, but to enjoy a noble liberty of thought and feeling, unfettered by the old and customary restraints of more cumbrous forms of government. His thoughts have no wall of circumvallation built up from immemorial times to overshadow and hedge in their liberal range. Life is thrown open to him as a fair untrodden field, on which to enter, with whatever implements of wisdom, sagacity, forethought, truth, and fortitude, God and nature have granted him. He is more sovereign than the highest sovereignty of all old empires; having a mind unawed by past traditions, and cheered to its duty by every hope in the future; resting, as it were, on the broad hill side of nature, and looking forth, in the eye of the sun, on whatever presents itself, with true natural impulses, and with a just regard to the actual relations of objects. It is not necessary, that is to say, it is not inherent in his condition, that he should adopt unwise or disproportioned views of art, of God, of society, nor, in fact, of any truth or set of truths.

"He sees, as from a tower, the end of all."

He feels, or he should feel, called on to exemplify humanity, and to render to the world the

true reading and solution of many vexed problems in government and social life. He sits at the plain table of uncorrupted truth; before him lies the map of human action, unbroken by the track of previous adventurers, or marked with conjectural shoals and soundings, the sunlight falls clear upon it, and the fresh air of heaven breathes on him its true inspiration. Is not this a task and service sufficiently great, noble, and momentous, to be placed in any man's hand? And would you not suppose that a little culture, a little glimmering of civilization, and some faint approaches to a manly demeanor, were needed in him who presents himself as an expounder and illustrator of these new truths?

How much would it ask to perform these services of American citizenship well and truly! What wise research, what profound sagacity, and steady temper of soul!

Attend our court of naturalization a day or two in advance of any coming election, and see how nobly, with what a terrible striving toward this ideal standard of citizenship, these requisitions are met! If philosophy has cast her robe, and taken in its stead a most inviting and fragmentary apparel of foul linen and broken fustian; if manhood and civilization have deserted broad brows and intelligent features, and taken up their abode in uncultured heads and carbuncled faces, then is our county court indeed the porch and vestibule of truth—the very gate of the republican heaven.

What glorious elements of citizenship lie imbedded in the rude nature of this man! What cunning and earnest sympathies must this Bæotian enjoy with Plato, the founder of republics—with Harrington—with Hampden that lived, with Sidney that died, for the establishment of free institutions! Something, assuredly, of the heroic valor that battled it with the tyrant at the defile of Thermopole, beams in his eye; something of the manly fortitude that defended Breed's hill, certainly betrays itself in the strong lines of his hard countenance. What Hancock sacrificed, what Franklin fabled, what Jefferson counselled, what triumphant George Washington achieved, must be known to him. Swift indeed is our new-born American gentleman's apprehension of what truth and duty require at his hands in this new country, where his lot is now for ever cast. With a steady hand, and well-assured of the solemn enterprise in which he is embarking all that he has of manhood, of hope, and hope of happiness, does he affix his name—or, more likely, the dignified sign-manual of his "mark," to the oath that severs him for ever from all old-world allegiances, and binds him sternly to the charter under which he has preferred to dwell.

Do we despise the poor, the unlearned, or the humble, because we hold this language? God forbid! Is it our wish that honest-hearted manhood, apparelled, it may be, in rags, and held low and cheap in the world's esteem, should, for any reason whatever, be robbed of its suf-

frage, and made to keep its peace in the presence of power, or wealth, or hereditary scorn? God and all his good angels forbid! But we do desire, as fervently as we can desire anything, that American citizenship shall not be cheapened; and that it may not be, we would hold our countrymen everywhere to a strict accountability, not only to themselves, but to their posterity, for all acts by which it may be endangered or diminished. If no better barrier can be raised for its protection, let us adhere religiously to the letter and the truth of the standard at present established by law. When these ill-omened candidates for investiture with the citizen's robe present themselves, let them be placed by the side of the measure known to the polity of our government, and let us learn whether they reach the mark or tower above it. Call into court, in the full face of day, on every occasion of creating an American citizen, some substantial, judicious, and true witness, who can swear, with a conscience awake to the service it is engaged in, that the catechumen there present has "*behaved himself for five years last past, as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same.*"

The testifying oath, as is well known, is taken, in many cases, by some staunch affidavit-maker, for groups of half-a-dozen or a dozen applicants at a time. This creature is generally a miserable electioneering agent, the tool of some party or other, and who swears himself through all that is required of him with the steady action of a hardened hackney. Extensive and discriminating indeed would be his acquaintance with men, if he could, in all these instances, furnish the nice testimony required by law. Familiar, in truth, to a degree almost miraculous, with the actings and doings, the noonday and midnight paths of obscure, dark, and unnoticed creatures, must this steady-swearing gentleman be, to give his "Amen" to the clerk's voice as he recites this portion of the oath.

But still more marvellous must be his insight into the metaphysical operations of the candidate, and in close communion for many days and many nights must these two worthies have dwelt, ere, we should think, its concluding sanction could be safely echoed.

Ay! here is a thick, dull, reckless fellow of a naturalization agent, infinitely better read in the paltriest party journal of the day, than in any work of higher morality, who takes upon himself to affirm, under the solemn requisitions of an oath in open court, that another thick, dull, reckless fellow of an applicant for naturalisation is, forsooth, "*attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States! and WELL DISPOSED TO THE GOOD ORDER AND HAPPINESS OF THE SAME!*"

The whole picture, as it presents itself to our mind, is too broad and Hogarthian to excite any feelings but, on the one hand, of hearty

mirth, or, on the other, of deep detestation and lament.

The individual who volunteers to testify to these nice questions of opinion and practice, is, ten chances to one, the nightly frequenter of a common taproom, where his accurate estimate of the character of his friend has been formed over occasional pots of cheap beer; and the conviction of his attachment to constitutional principles, doubtless wrought in sundry lucid and logical discussions of the favorite text from the Declaration of Independence, that all men are born free and equal, particularly the two gentlemen in question.

To say of any man, that he was, of a truth, attached to the noble principles of our constitution, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of these United States, knowing truly how much was required for the good order and happiness of such a government, would be to pronounce his highest eulogy. For an American, born on the soil, reared amid usages and habits that are daily lessons to his young understanding, and taught by all that he sees, hears, or dreams, something of the character of the government of which he is a pledged supporter, an enlightened good sense effects much, if not all, of what a foreigner must acquire by patient research, by anxious questioning, and by years of strenuous devotion to the spirit of free institutions. Let him not, therefore, take upon himself lightly the proud character of American citizen; let him not dare to become a legislator for twenty-six sovereignties, to sit in the grand councils of free, thoughtful men, bearing a large portion of the world's hopes and fears upon them, without a grave preparation for the duty! Curses, both loud and deep, must wait on him and his, if by any inefficiency or violence or mischance of theirs, the world's great hope should be obscured or blighted: and let us, the native and natural owners and defenders of the soil, take heed that by no weak or idle or misplaced philanthropy of ours the same evil issue be not wrought, and that the malediction, with double and fearful force, fall not on us!

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#### EVERY FOURTH YEAR.

It is pretty well known all over the world by this time, we imagine, that the American people indulge themselves every four years with a national entertainment on a very grand scale. The chief figures in the divertissement are two gentlemen "natural-born citizens, who have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years residents within the United States," who kindly offer themselves as objects of playful abuse, elegant invective, satirical dissection, and such other intellectual pastimes as their fellow-citizens may think proper to engage in at their exclusive risk and expense. This leads, of course, to many happy

biographical sketches of the two gentlemen, many delicate investigations into various parts and passages of recent history. It is therefore now regarded as a question pretty well settled, that a candidate for the office of president of the United States, must be not only a gentleman of eminent civil capacity, but also one holding in perfect contempt the ordinary ease, comfort, and peace of mind, that citizens of a less noble temperament are supposed to seek after.

All the actions, traits, peculiarities, and characteristic features of his past life, are as matter of course brought to light and examined with a truly Cuvierian scrutiny and caution; the shank-bone of the political mammoth meets with the same attention as the great spinal column; and in a due state of preservation and dissection, he is presented to the public; having first, however, undergone a grand inquest at Baltimore or Harrisburgh, where ten score and ninety coroners a side have passed upon the illustrious subject. Being thus formally investigated with a candidateship, our mammoth politician strides forth into the field of controversy, and playfully swinging his trunk this way and that, and discharging its contents, covers the land in every quarter with huge epistolary blots and great patches of financial or other temporary disquisition.

Now commences the strife of giants; Anak to Anak, and as in the conflict of Milton's angels, the very foundations of the earth are removed to furnish ammunition for the mighty battle. Against the person of the one combatant is discharged a long and fierce cannonade of cutting charges of recent misconduct; while the other finds himself suddenly smitten, and actually reeling under the force of a ton-weight of decayed pamphlets, whirled about his ears by the sturdy arm of some committee or junto. The one is incontinently fetched a blow on the ear with a portentous file of some forgotten "Advertiser" or "Advocate;" and the other, as summarily, has all the wind knocked from his body politic by the clenched fist of an old campaigner or veteran reminiscent.

On all possible questions are the candidates' opinions demanded; on all possible questions are answers given. Letter follows letter in the columns of the public journals, like peal on peal through a sultry tropical sky.

A general uncovering of abuses, corruptions, and enormities of either party, takes place, and the whole country is filled with the outcry of exposed culprits, and the odor of governmental gangrenes. The land swarms with declarants and affidavit-makers. The office-holders stand to their arms! and the office-seekers set up an astounding cry of siege and onslaught.

Miraculous changes of opinion are announced in the newspapers, and the names of twenty, thirty, or forty recusants to the administration in power are every now and then published like so many certificates to the efficacy of a new pill or patent nostrum, or the hand of a testator

set to some solemn instrument, by which the whole power and patronage of the government are conveyed to the only lawful legatees and descendants, the party then out of power. Canvasses are taken in steamboats and stage-coaches, at church-raising and baby-christenings, by which the fate of the dominant party is held to be conclusively settled by majorities almost too great to be recorded and accredited. The age of hurly-burly and universal oratory has actually set in, and from every conceivable vantage-ground, the general deluge is loosened and descends upon the people in a long, copious, unintermitting flood for more than forty days and forty nights.

A contest like our recent general election we imagine was never seen nor known before in this or any other country. Fifteen millions of people (for we hold that wives and children are implicated in all the acts of husband and father, and do, in the eye of law and truth, whatever is done by their principals), hurrying to and fro in wagons, stage-coaches, and steamers; lengthening out in bannered processions, or packing themselves close in dense auditories and masses; silent as death or the calm mid-land sea under the breath of some potent speaker, or bursting again into shouts and multitudinous choral songs of political faith or political triumph. What eye has before seen spectacles like these? Night marches by torch-light; pilgrimages by land and water, from every point of the compass, every whither; cities roaring like dens of lions, with a conflict of many voices; inoffensive dorps and villages, rudely taken by the collar as it were, and roused into states of huge activity and immense bustle by delegations and committees from more stirring places; to what tends all this? Simply to the calm, clear enunciation of the popular will. These were but the preliminary triumphs of that peaceful conqueror and arbiter, the ballot-box. By startling auspices like these was the approach of that little ark of our civil faith proclaimed; and in the midst of such demonstrations, and in a conflict stormier than our history had ever known, was it placed high and supreme, above all dishonor, where God grant it may rest through all future times!

Six months or more before the momentous event—to speak more particularly of its incidents—painters, printers, engravers, were kept busily at work in furnishing ensigns of the most gorgeous colors, placards of an unrivalled magnitude of text, and badges of the greatest possible plausibility for house-tops, fences, and button-holes. The whole intellectual activity—the literature of the country, for the time, seemed to take a political form. Epics yielded to long narrative speeches; elegies were superseded by dolorous articles on hard times in the newspapers; Tom Moore was forgotten amid the sweeter melodies of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too;" mathematical science was concentrated on the framing of election returns; and



biography assumed the form of very lifelike and racy sketches of the characters of the various candidates for office.

But more particularly was great industry displayed in the department of song-writing. So melodious an era was probably never before known in the whole history of the world. The ballad of old Bishop Percy, the lay of the Minneshingers, the rondeau, the ode of Pindar and Dryden, were completely eclipsed by the race of improvising minstrels that suddenly sprung into existence in every quarter of the land. Impromptu was the rule of composition, and the bards chanted whatever the gods inspired on the spur of the occasion. They did not weary themselves with preliminary studies, with currying Pegasus, and training and caparisoning him, with great show and outlay of labor, for the Parnassian journey. Not they! On the contrary, they stood up right manfully on the first barrel that presented, and proceeded instantly to do the task allotted. They did not cudgel their skulls for fine conceits or high-flying fancies; the first word that came was as good as Homer or Tyrtæus, and they chanted on, singing and composing in a breath; and if what they uttered fell into metre, so much the better; if not, a thousand or two good bellowing voices roared the chorus through triumphantly, and bore it beyond criticism.

Among other things worthy of note, the principle of association seemed during the recent canvass to have suddenly acquired an astonishing force. The ordinary political gatherings and committees could not satisfy the gregarious propensity. Every possible kind of club was formed. A fraternal, a family feeling sprung up among politicians, and they were no longer to be seen singly, but always in troops and herds of hundreds or thousands. Among these, visits were passed in a truly excellent social spirit; New York making a journey of a hundred miles to interchange salutations with Dutchess county; and gentlemen assembling under the delicate designation of "Butt-Enders" in Brooklyn or Williamsburgh, exposing their exquisite persons to the fatigues of a ride of twenty miles or more to their brethren on the island, the "Molly-hogs" of Patchogue.

The democratic tendency of the times was humorously betrayed in the ornithological and other designations which these clubs, in their baptismal fervor, saw fit to take to themselves. Leaving the national bird, the eagle (who may be supposed to have not a few aristocratic and monarchical qualities), in the clear upper air, they assumed, as the most hideous emblem they could fix upon, the great, stupid staring owl, the *Strix Cucularia*, or burrowing owl of Bonaparte, and under his characteristic auspices, filled the night with their dreadful screeches and uproar. Rivaling these in happiness of title were the gentlemen of the hyena club, who gave the world to understand, by this designation, that the fury and savageness of their partisanship were by no means to be called in

question. Then there were the civilized and Christian worthies, who, laboring under a terrible propensity to employ their lungs, and who, taking pleasure in affrighting quiet citizens by the strength of their clamors, carried on their trade under the style and appellation of Roarers. To these are to be added Unionists, Faugh-Ballagh boys, the political hussars of the rank and file, Tips, North-benders, and a legion more of rare, curious, and felicitous description. For a time the community seemed to have lapsed into the barbarism of the original inheritors of the soil, and to be striving to restore, for a season, the old Indian divisions into tribes of every possible, bloody, and ferocious designation. Some even had their war-whoop in true Indian style, and could give it with a truth and energy which satisfied all within hearing, of their genuine claim to the savage and barbarian character they had playfully assumed. Others, as we have elsewhere hinted, chanted heathen and outlandish ditties, with an effect, which a Mohawk or Seminole melodist might have pined to rival.

Let no man suppose, from this light and cheerful view of the subject, that we regard the recent contest with any other feelings than such as deep reverence and respectful consideration prompt. We look upon a general election like that through which we have just passed, as the great act of national supremacy. We listen to its verdict as to the voice of a nation by no means feeble, by no means dishonored, by no means impaired or cast down. We take heed of it as the high periodical trial of the constitutional strength and the popular intelligence. No event is—no event can be to us, and to all Americans, nor in truth, rightly understood, to all the world, of graver import than this. Here is the earthquake incident to your boasted foundations; the quadrennial spasm that shall test the sinew and heart of your apparent vigor. Let us then, we implore you, so gird ourselves as to approach these grand recurring incidents with increased hope and faith, with increased means of encounter and triumph. From each conflict with this eventful occasion, let us come forth unbroken in strength, by all means; schooled, if it may be, how to avoid certain errors in its conduct, certain lapses from the spirit that should be with us before we enter upon it, and during its continuance. If possible, let the people, the mass and general people, be so elevated as not to need appeals to the eye or the appetite; nor to require enticing emblems or taking devices to fix their faith in this party or that. Let us bring our political strifes more and more to the broad tests of truth; to expositions of principle, and to appeals to the sound hearts of enlightened thinkers. This can not be done at once. It can not be effected to-day nor to-morrow.

We do not take it upon ourselves to say that all emblems and devices are to be condemned and denounced as mere springs and impostures. Good hearts and true have been fired, at memor-



able times, to noble actions, by the sight of stars, or crescents, or meteors, floating over them; by the hovering wings of emblematical eagles, or the bronzed rage of visionary lions.

By the peculiar power of the imagination, such symbols are made to represent, in heroic brevity, the faith, the valor, the achievements, the whole glowing features of one's native land. With gathered force, all that she has done, perilled, or suffered, enters his warm heart, and stimulates him to put forth the best of his strength and manhood. Symbols are therefore needed, in a peculiar crisis, where much is to be wrought at the instant, or where the mind requires to be raised into a condition of more than ordinary intensity and force. But civil government is no such affair; that is, in a great measure, a matter of plain sense and deliberate procedure. Calm and unimpassioned understandings are required to construe constitutions, to examine and discuss questions of administration, and to scrutinize and compare the characters of candidates for office. No heroic ardor is needed in the performance of these plain duties. There is no sudden, instantaneous effect to be produced, which calls for direct, dazzling appeals to the eye or the ear. Time does not press; months may be taken to form opinions, and months more to act upon them. The enemy does not stand before you to be cut down or borne over by one sweep of sabres, or a single charge of cavalry. He is to be reached at a great distance and by circuitous approaches. He is to be conquered by delay, which matures opinion; and to be wrought upon by peaceful spells, speaking to him, reasoning with him from the little aulic chamber of the ballot.

It is fair matter of question whether too much is not staked on this single cast for the presidency.

Was it intended by the framers of our constitution that such extraordinary overwhelming prominence should be given to the executive office? That it should be made the object of intense hope, of agonizing apprehension, as it now is? On the contrary, if we read aright the policy of the founders of this government, it was meant that the whole federal administration should advance in a line, occupying an equal share of the public jealousy and the popular regards. Events have in some degree wrested this purpose aside; the personal character of some of our chief magistrates, and in other cases, the incidents of their time, have caused the general eye to be fixed with too great anxiety on this single office, and to associate with its doings the whole conduct of government. The president of the United States is not, should not be the government of the United States. It is folly and madness so to regard him; it is treason and sacrilege for him so to regard himself. On this point the public mind has taken a false bias for several years past,

and with monomaniac violence to truth, has wrought innumerable evils by neglecting the claims of the other elements of government on their attention. Standing singly as he does, the president will at all times attract a large share of observation and notice; but alone, unsupported or discountenanced by other authorities, his power for evil is comparatively slight and superficial. He can cast arrows of desolation into the land; but these failing, the nerve that impels them home is utterly wanting, and they fall harmless in the midst of the people. As recently administered and regarded, the presidential arm is clothed with thunder, and whatever bolt is shot forth rattles and blazes through the whole length of the land, scattering dismay, confusion, and ruin. In a tranquil and regulated view of this office, these things could not be.

The presidency of these United States is certainly a glittering mark; a grand epoch in any man's career to become an historical personage, in the same noble line with Washington and Adams. But is not the ambition of our greatest intellects too much directed to this point? Is not this office regarded too much as the only supreme station of honor and renown? To be chief magistrate of twenty-six sovereign states is a noble pre-eminence; but is it nothing to be chief Thinker, chief Teacher, or chief Poet of the same union? Are arms and civil power to wrest away for ever, from majestic learning, from passionate truth, from climbing philosophy, the crown and laurels of the earth? We trust not. The sword protects, the truncheon sustains our chartered privileges as communities; but deeper into the nature of man, and with a more potent and fruitful energy, does the voice of the uninaugurated thinker pierce. He labors at the foundations of humanity; and there discovers hope and charity, fancy full of earnest dreams that foreshadow truth, faith in man, reverence, and divine aspirations, without which all government and social administration would straightway crumble into chaos and barbarous disorder.

There are other pinnacles besides the capitolian, which we desire to see occupied. Office and power dazzle the world for a season, and shake it with their loud chariot wheels; but they pass away, and the still small voice of the printed thought, then unheeded, breaks forth on the after age with an almost supernatural clearness and force of utterance. The statesman is pursued by shouting and tumultuous multitudes; while the poor scholar (the master and tyrant of his destiny) is strolling in some far-off silent field with a single friend. The next generation, perhaps the very next year, right comes into possession of his own, and while thousands hang on every breath of the poet, the poor politician is gone into the land of forgetfulness, accompanied only by the shadow of his renown.

## THE FIELD DEATH.

LITTLE Tom Hubble was a miserable wretch, a poor, beggarly scamp, and might as well have been, for all the provision this world made for him in the way of food, raiment, and lodging; a little shivering cherub on one of the tombstones, in the Gowannus churchyard. It is true, Tom enjoyed the reputation of living with a flourishing old grandfather, who thought all the world of Tom, and who was supposed to do nothing else all day but contrive projects how he should live on pudding and poultry, be clad in fine linen and exquisite broadcloth, and lie down in soft beds, with the echo of pleasant stories, narrated for his special benefit, lingering in his ear to sooth his slumbers. Tom, however, who had a way of seeing things that was peculiar to himself, was pretty well convinced that what he discovered regularly, three times a day, on a little pine table in the corner of a small back kitchen, was a veritable dish of black scraps of bread, with two or three dry beans straggling about among them; that the apparel in which he was allowed to endure his paltry limbs whenever he went abroad, was, to be sure, a sort of gala dress, made up of motley fragments of the old gentleman's cast-off garments, in various stages of antiquity and decay—but that his actual, in-door, daily garments, consisted of a little more than a small carter's frock, a straw hat in a state of decline, and a pair of high boots that served for stockings, pantaloons, and leggins.

Besides all this, Tom was either so wonderfully acute or so miserably stupid, as to discern in the couch on which these same limbs, so ignominiously treated in broad day, were stretched at night, nothing more nor less than a pallet of hard straw, in a little cockloft, with a bag of musty bran by way of a pillow.

Notwithstanding all these little circumstances, Tom's grandfather was accounted and held by all Gowannus to be a large-souled, spirited old gentleman, who knew what became his dignity as the oldest inhabitant and freeholder of that respectable village as well as any man, although he did indulge in one or two trifling eccentricities, which, if they had been known to the said townspeople, might have materially abated their respect; one of which was, that the old gentleman professed to obtain his household supplies from sundry friends of his who were in that line of business in town, and who chose to show the intensity of their affection for him in this substantial way; whereas, the truth was, and this the old gentleman knew perfectly well, he was in the habit of stealing over to the city when he would be least missed, and purchasing, at very low rates and from very low traders, cheap articles in a somewhat decayed and questionable state of preservation. The other singularity which tended to blind the sagacious burghers, was a habit of his (as in the case of poor Tom), of never presenting himself in public unless in full costume, and of a very picturesque and im-

posing character; consisting of a venerable white broadbrim, a reverend, wide-skirted, blue coat, with silver buttons, smallclothes of an excellent quality, polished top-boots, and an emphatic cane, with a head as white and bald as that of the old grandfather himself.

Although it will be seen from this that the astute commonalty and gentry of Gowannus were in the way of being slightly deluded and overreached, yet was Tom Hubble inclined to look upon it all as a pleasant little entertainment, with undress rehearsals in the old house, and performances in the open air—with the exception of the spare diet, and that he thought hadn't the slightest perceptible flavor of humor in it, but, on the contrary, was to be held as extremely dull, barren, and unsatisfactory.

With some such reflections passing through his mind, Tom sat one morning at his little pine table, endeavoring to enliven his dry meal with a few grains of salt that he had brought in his pocket from an old fisherman acquaintance of his, upon his scattered beans, when he was suddenly roused by the old gentleman's shouting in his ear, in a very obstreperous voice:—

"What the devil are you about, boy!—putting salt on your beans?"

"Yes, this is salt—I believe," said Tom, timidly.

"Are you sure it's salt—you young rascal?" roared the old gentleman. "Isn't it rock-crystal powdered, or white sand, or something of that sort? Come, you had better make it out one of these two."

"It's salt—nothing but common table-salt," reiterated poor Tom Hubble.

"Nothing but common table-salt!—you thrifless young vagabond; you talk of it as familiarly as if you had seen it every day of your life. You'll be the ruin of me yet, with your extravagant ways—I know you will!"

"No, I won't, grandfather," said Tom, with some slight hesitation, as if the boldness of the old man's prediction had made him a partial believer in what he propounded.

"Yes, you will—don't tell me you won't," said the cross-grained old gentleman. "None of your won'ts, and shan'ts, and don'ts, and mustn'ts, with me. Your day's over in this house, so you may get out as soon as you choose."

Tom stole a glance at his grandfather, and then shivered a little; then he took up a crust in his fingers, shivered a little more, dropped his crust, and stole another glance; scarcely knowing where he was, or what he was doing.

"I say you may get out of the house!" shouted the grandfather. "Isn't that plain Saxon English? Get you gone; you have devoured my substance long enough!"

Without allowing Tom any great length of time to ponder on the true interpretation to be given to these passages, the old man stepped forward, kicked over the little pine table, scattering the contents of the dish far and wide over the floor; seized Tom himself by the col-

lar, and dragging him through the outer room, pushed him swiftly into the street. He then rapidly closed the door, turned a bolt, and took his station at a window which looked out upon poor Tom Hubble, and watched the further pleasure of that forlorn youth. Poor Tom's first motion, on finding himself landed in the street, was to turn about and make a survey of the edifice, from which it was his impression, although he was not sure of it, he had just been summarily ejected. True enough, there it stood, the same dilapidated, discolored old building, with which he had been familiar so many years. Yes, and there in the old window was displayed a full-length illustration that satisfied him his construction of the text could not be far amiss. The truth, then, was, he had been turned out of his grandfather's house in open day, and there stood his grandfather, muttering curses, and raising his hands to heaven in imprecations of trouble and disaster upon his poor, weak, childish head; and what should he do?

Tom's first inclination was to go and drown himself in a dreary pool, that stood in a cluster of hemlocks, beyond the hill; then he thought he would like to fly with the wind into remote places, deserts, and wildernesses, where he should be all alone, and never see again the cruel face of that old grandsire of his. He ended by rambling away, like one bewildered, he knew not whither, only getting farther and farther from the village at each step, and saddening as he walked. Now and then he paused a moment, thinking that he had better go back, and falling on his knees before the old man, beg his forgiveness with clasped hands and weeping eyes—he knew not for what—and find shelter once more under the old roof, and try to be happy in spite of cares, and crosses, and spare meals; but as he gained the brow of the upland, the good resolution strengthening momentarily within him, he ventured to look back at the old homestead (the bower of his boyhood), and there he discovered, through tears that almost blinded him, his old grandfather still standing, rigid as a statue, in the window, his bald head uncovered, and his hands uplifted in the same fixed attitude of malediction and menace. This decided him, and he wandered on. He reached a sunny little meadow beyond the brow, and there he sat down, and, in spite of his sorrows, could not fail to take note of the little creatures at his feet; in truth, never were they more dear to Tom than now that he was deserted of all the world. The high-vaulting grasshopper was foremost, cutting all sorts of capers in the air; the solemn cricket was faring to and fro in his black cloak, like a friar full of errands, through all his little parish of greenland; toads—yes, toads, as airy and fantastic as clowns at the circus, were caprioling about in their spotted jackets; and large bullfrogs, emerging from the spring, came shambling up the slope, and with their great eyes stared at poor Tom, as if they felt very anxious to know what it was that troubled him.

Thus he straggled about all day, in a kind of wild dream, made up partly of gloomy images of the village life he had fled, and partly of pleasanter fancies drawn from what was about him. His little heart warmed toward every fair object that he saw, and he scarcely passed a tree greener than others without feeling what happiness there was in this world; and then, again, as the shadow of old sorrows fell upon him, it grew as cold and dreary as a stone. Night was coming on fast; Tom had had no food all that day; but shelter from the chill air and the bleak winds he must have, and accordingly, after due thought and pondering, he made his way with some difficulty into a piece of dark woods, far off to the southeast; and, embowering himself in a thick shade of bushes, he sought rest for his little, weary limbs.

All that night he lay in the wood, slumbering a little at times, and then starting up at sight of strange objects that haunted his dreams; in truth the whole region seemed, to fanciful little Tom, to be full of all sorts of wonderful spectacles and singular noises. At one time he thought he heard a lion's roar, away off in a dismal corner that he recollected passing, and which, now that he bethought himself, might have been a veritable lion's lair; and then he imagined that he discovered up in the twilight gloom of the tree-tops, great birds of evil omen brooding and hovering about, and ready to pounce on him with their hungry talons. About midnight, however, he was awakened by steps passing lightly by, and looking forth from his covert, he discovered a coffin borne on poles by two men, who seemed dejected as he could gather from their bowed heads and slow steps, and to be bearing a burden that was heavy to their hearts, although light enough it might be to their mere manly strength. They seemed, too, to have come from a great distance, and to have had a gloomy midnight march upon the highway, for the coffin was covered with dust, and wet with dew.

"This poor child is dead," said one of them, as they passed, "and thanks to God for it! Her dwelling-place was full of strifes, and gloom, and sadness; but her grave shall be, I promise you, one after her own heart!"

"Do you think we are pursued?" asked the other.

"Not at all; not at all!" he answered promptly. "He dare not do that! it would be too great a peril even for him to meet a brother in this lone wood, by the side of her coffin."

"Did she die, then, of a broken heart, as people say? are you sure of that?"

"Come with me to-morrow, after she is laid safely in the earth," he answered, "and I will show you the little window out of which the poor girl used to lean when it was breaking, and I'll point to the grass underneath it, where her warm young tears (God make them fruitful of remorse to him!) fell, and ask you whether it is not greener, and taller, and darker too, than any that grows near the spot." The

young man laid down his end of the bier for a moment, turned his back upon his companion, and wrung his hands convulsively together. It was for a moment only, and resuming his burden they hurried on.

This seemed to be a timely lesson preached to poor little Tom, and one that taught him how, when the great world is slumbering in cities and hamlets, when church-towers, and mighty squares and thoroughfares are asleep, there is sometimes a deep, restless sadness in the heart of obscure places, and that men are tossed, and vexed, and tormented with wrongs that would keep the world awake, if it but knew of them.

Tom felt that he was not alone, even in that dark thicket—which he had deemed impervious to the track of man—but that other hearts were bleeding with his, and that time was bringing on the funeral company, and the train of mourners as well there as he could in the open fields in broad day, or through the village-street on sabbath afternoons.

When day dawned it wakened through the wood many cheerful melodies, that had slept there all night long, and which, had they but spoken in the darkness and gloom, would have sounded like angels' voices to the poor boy; but were now in the broad day no comfort whatever to him.

He crept forth from his lodging as cheerless as child well could be; nothing moving in his mind but a vague desire of returning to the village, and making good the name he must have lost by his flight, by casting himself at the very door-stone of his stern old grandfather, and imploring him to come forth and take his life, for charity's sake. With this sharp anguish at his heart, the boy stood on the brow above Gowannus, looking at times to the great city beyond the river, and wondering if in all its mighty throng there was one poor wretch as sad, as hungered, and disconsolate as he.

By slow, uncertain, timorous steps, he wound his way down the slope, and found himself, now that the morning had grown into a full bright day, standing in an open field or common in the very centre of of the village.

Tom's return, quiet and sad as it was, seemed to set the little place beside itself; for he had no sooner planted a foot on the village ground than the whole region was in an uproar. Heads were thrust from windows, moping and mowing and making faces of disdain and anger at him; fingers were pointed from every direction toward his unhappy person, and even the village children, who should have felt for little Tom's cares and troubles as if they had been their own, formed themselves into a mob and commenced pelting him at a distance, with stones and dirt.

Tom was no saint, at least no Saint Stephen, to submit meekly to this species of martyrdom, and might have avenged himself to his heart's content on this detachment of his enemies, had

not his turning about to do so, always produced a very sudden and ignominious dispersion of the small gentry, who fled pell-mell, crying out that Tom—ugly Tom was after them. To be sure there was a single cheerful ray in this gloomy hour of Tom's trial, for as he stood, the centre of all these angry eyes and this shower of contumely, a poor old fisherman, a sort of crony of his, came up and accosted him with an open hand, but having business somewhere or other not to be neglected, he was compelled to hurry away, and to leave the little sufferer alone, with the cold blood rippling about his heart, like a tide at sea.

After a while the fierce eyes were drawn in, the admonitory heads ceased to wag, and the school-bell called the little scholars away, and Tom, weary and sad, and riveted as it were to the spot, sat down on a stone, a sort of horse-block, and tried to think over the unlucky chances of the day, and to sound his own little heart to learn from it how he had borne himself in his troubles; whether as a true-hearted noble boy, or as a sad fear-naught and scapegallows. He found nothing there that reproached him very sharply; and then he looked about him to see whether natural objects, such as the sky, the earth, and the great bay, gave note of any sudden change, which might have driven men out of their wits, to treat him thus.

The earth seemed as green and fresh as ever; the little knolls looked as cheerful, and the little nooks and valleys as calm and shady. The sky had certainly lost none of its brightness, but stood there as blue, as serene, and immovable, as it did the first time he looked up to it; and there lay the glorious bay, as proud, as hospitable, as inviting to great ships, as on the first day it smiled on the Half-moon of Heinrich Hudson. He did not know that the old man had caused the town to believe how that vile off-shoot of his, Tom Hubble, had smitten him, his old grandsire, and spat upon him, and fled from him with curses and fiendish looks, like a little wretch as he was. This Tom did not know, and so he sat there an image of silent despair, in the midst of all the life and bustle of noonday, plunged in deep thought; when a tall figure, unobserved by him, glided from an old dwelling behind, and stealing on him unawares, its arm was stretched over his shoulder, and ere he could do more than discover, in the shadow that fell before him, one which he knew, from its often before having stealthily marred his boyish sports and pleasures—a knife had struck deep into his unquiet little heart, and given it rest at once and forever. Unnoticed by any, the figure glided back.

Tom's head declined upon his knees without a gasp or groan; and in that posture the poor boy's corpse remained through two hours of high noon, neglected by all, and unapproached. The grandfather had so darkened the boy's character, that not a soul would draw near to

the stone where he had been sitting quite as desolate, but not as haughty and vindictive, as the sea-eagle on his rock.

At length, as night began to fall, and the business of the day to pause, attention was again turned toward the wicked boy; as he was watched for a long time, and not discovered to stir limb or muscle, censures of his obstinacy and dreadful temper grew louder and louder, until the whole village was fairly embarked in a swelling chorus of invective and indignation.

But when some one, more compassionate or observant than others, suggested that he might be dead of very shame and grief, or perhaps of hunger, the village was perfectly astounded, and lifting up its pious hands, cried out that he dared not do it; it would be too much for even him. The dissenter who had evoked all this clamor, by the audacity of his suggestions, now advised them to go and see, and as much as gave out, that if he—a sort of professional watcher at sick-beds in the neighborhood—knew a dead body from a live one, Tom Hubble was as ready for a shroud as any man, woman, or child at present in that village. Pricked and stimulated by the ironical observations of this gentleman, three or four formed themselves into a delegation, and waited upon poor Tom, and found him, true enough, as void of life as an assistant-preacher or an unfeeling attorney; much to their confusion and wonder. Everybody was shocked and smitten aghast with horror and amazement, and Tom Hubble's character advanced steadily in value as the wonder grew.

"How could it have happened! at noonday, in our most public street, with a hundred eyes upon him!"

Here was wonderment sufficient for half a dozen good sized villages; and Gowannus made the most of it.

The village was, in truth, stunned and bewildered; and somewhat touched at heart too, notwithstanding its pragmatism toward poor Tom when living. His good qualities came up freshly into many a memory; and little acts of charity—of kind consideration for poor creatures—even the little thefts and pilferings from his grandfather's store, to be bestowed on houseless, foodless wretches, pleaded in behalf of the boy's corpse, and began to gather about it something of a romantic and generous interest.

Some even, now that they remembered all that he had been, and the cruel death he had died, with that red gash in his bosom, wept tears that fell upon his cold heart, and the now colder stone on which, they now first unavailingly called to mind, he had sat for hours that day, unprotected and forlorn. But who was poor Tom Hubble's murderer? Where was he—with such lightness of foot, and skill of hand, and strength of hate, as to have plunged the knife into a young boy's heart, at broad noonday, unseen—yea, even unsuspected? The

news must be given to his poor old grandfather; and will it not break his heart, much cause of displeasure as he may think he should harbor against poor Tom?

Some one was despatched to the old man's house; and knocked loudly, but no answer; nor to a second, nor a third knock; and the messenger, therefore, made his way into the house of himself.

The first room was empty; but in a back closet or pantry, removed from the tumult and noises of the street, he discovered the old grandfather bent over a dark chest, and plying his fingers with the utmost speed, in counting gold and silver coin, which he dropped into the chest with gloating eyes, and a jingle that seemed to make his heart jump.

Without heeding the addition to his company, the old man kept on counting with great rapidity and earnestness, and muttering to himself, until the messenger touched him upon the shoulder, and whispered in his ear that Tom Hubble was dead!

"What say you?" cried the old man staring about him, like one in a dream, "Tom Hubble, my little, darling grandson, Tom Hubble, dead! It can't be. You are practising on me. When did he die? Where? How?"

To these questions, the messenger could, of course, return none but vague and unsatisfactory answers; at which the old man seemed very wroth and furious; glaring upon him with wild eyes, and appearing to regard him as an idle intruder upon his privacy. Renewing the questions in a louder and more peremptory voice, and receiving the same replies, he seized the unlucky messenger, and, with little ado, thrust him forth from the house.

The messenger had scarcely returned to the group gathered about the body of Tom Hubble, when the old grandfather was descried moving down upon them with great strides; bearing in his hand an uplifted stick, and menacing them at a distance with extreme violence.

As he drew nearer, they retreated from the spot, and his eyes fell upon the corpse, as it lay stretched upon the rock, with the great red gash gaping in its breast. For a moment, the old man paused and looked wildly round, and then he went and sat submissively down by the side of the corpse, and took its head in his lap, as if he would call it back to life with caresses and mournful smiles. He sat in this way for more than an hour; the villagers standing back and gazing on the spectacle with wonder and pity. He then drew off his old wide-skirted coat, cast it upon the boy's dead limbs, and staggered like one blind or in a bewildering dream, back to his dwelling.

For a long time the old man's house was still and noiseless as death itself; the crowd had gathered again about the fatal spot, when he was discovered reaching forth from an upper window of his dwelling, and fastening against its walls the dead boy's carter's frock, and presently, above it, the old melancholy straw

hat. He then brought forth from within, a decayed old saddle, with a pair of rusty stirrups, and hung them above the window on a wooden hook; one by one he thus produced every dilapidated, mouldy, and ruinous implement that had laid rotting and mouldering in corners and closets for half a century, and fixed it against the wall, until the whole house-side was covered, like some ancient temple, with testimonies of famine, close-pinching thrift, and lean beggary. Inside out, of a truth, was the old house turned, and every one looked on, wondering where this phantasy would end. This display completed with dangling ox-chains and rusted horse-shoes, there was a pause until the old man was again seen emerging upon the roof, shouldering an old square table, and fixing it on its centre, as for his evening meal; presently, scant provisions followed, and, having first planted a reel on another corner of the house-top, he sat down, in view of all Gowanus to despatch his thrifty fare. Neglecting this employment, he would every now and then start up; at one time busying himself with great industry in going through the mimicry of reeling off yarn and winding it in imaginary balls; at another, carefully shading his eyes and looking steadily through the Narrows for a long time, as if on a search for some ship in which he had a special interest. In this way, as long as he could be seen, the old man passed from freak to freak; and when night came on he might be discovered for a long time, stalking back and forth, like an evil spirit, through the gloom, and filling the whole region where he walked with an indescribable dread and wonder.

During all that night watchers sat by the poor boy's corse, which lay upon the rock rigid and motionless. The night-dews fell upon them thick and fast, but they watched on, knowing how sacred a charge was in their trust, and feeling how deep indeed, was the mystery that brooded over the little spot on which they kept their vigils. Perfect stillness reigned everywhere, and the village was sepulchred in a deep sleep, through which passed from house to house images of deadly murder, stern hands upon feeble throats, and stealthy knives plucking at the life of innocent young bosoms. But a single light pierced the general gloom, and that moved restlessly about the dwelling of the old grandfather, sometimes showing itself at an upper window, and then glancing to and fro in the lower chambers of the house; then it would be interrupted by a figure passing between, which cast its tall shadow gloomily over the spot on which the murdered corse was resting.

The morning brought no light to the mystery, although it wrought new changes in the fantasy of the old man, and seemed to waken in his brain whatever strange, uncouth, or raging fancies had been slumbering there during the

night. The moment day dawned he put forth his head to know of the watchers whether they had seen a flock of crows pass that way; and if they should, to ask them back to meals in his name. A moment after it was again forth, and he wished them in the Lord's name, and as they loved him, to catch him a long-nosed weasel, and hang it on a pole at the end of his house to scare away goblins and witches. Then, after getting out at the window, and sitting in the casement with his legs dangling down for half an hour or more, he would suddenly start back, and throwing himself at full length on the floor, would lie there as if in a torpor for a long space. In the mean time the preparations for the boy's funeral proceeded, all in the open air, for among other freaks the old man had denied its entrance, standing at his door and raising his hands with a wild look against the bearers; but when it was laid cleanly and silently on the bier, and was ready to be borne to the grave, he rushed forth, and seizing one end of the tressels, vowed that he would carry the child to his burial.

All along the way some mad antic or other escaped him, which would seem to denote that his brain had been shattered by the poor boy's dreadful death; none venturing to cross his wildness, withheld either by fear or reverence of his sorrowful age. At one time he would arrest the procession in mid career, and stay it till he could pluck up long blue grass and bunches of field clover to cast upon the coffin; and then clutching it up, he would hurry forward at such a pace as to throw the whole train into disorder and strange confusion.

When at length they had reached the grave, the old man, dropping his end of the burden with such suddenness as to nearly overturn the coffin, stepped hastily forward, and bidding the diggers stand aside, struck the spade deep in the earth, and plying it swiftly, soon finished it to its very bottom.

This done, he drew back; and the attendants who had stood apart regarding him in wonder and surprise, approached and lowered the coffin gently to its appointed place, which was scarce accomplished, when the old man again stepped swiftly forward and cast a huge stone down into the grave; giving them to understand that it was an anchor which would steady the coffin in the earth until judgment-day, when it would surely have its doom. The grave was speedily filled, the turf duly levelled, and the company, saddened and amazed at all they had seen, turned away, leaving the grandfather standing hard by alone.

The last time they looked back from the highway, they discovered the old man walking rapidly to and fro along the grave, and stamping at times with savage fury on the earth, as if he regarded the poor boy buried there as his deadliest foe!

## THE SCHOOL-FUND.

Looking directly at the heart of the subject, we must frankly confess, that no question of greater moment has arisen among us than the recent application of the Roman church for a portion of the joint school-fund of this state and city, for the use of eight Catholic schools, governed according to the creed and discipline of that religious body. The petitions for this purpose have been addressed to our city council; have been discussed and argued before them at great length; and now that the case is fully before us, the grounds of this remarkable application seem to be these:

First; a want of confidence on the part of the petitioners in the Public School Society of this city, and in their mode of conducting the business of education in the schools in their charge.

Secondly; a desire to procure from the municipal government, an appropriation of funds for the support of schools for the education of Catholic children, who could not be conscientiously intrusted to the teaching of the common schools now in use.

The want of confidence in the School Society is enforced by charges of incompetency; treachery in the performance of their trust; "causing the pupils to become untractable, disobedient, and even contemptuous, toward their parents—unwilling to learn anything of religion—as if they had become illuminated, and could receive all the knowledge of religion necessary for them, by instinct or inspiration."

A further topic under this prominent head, appears to consist in the regret of the petitioners that there is no means of ascertaining to what extent the teachers in the schools of the society carried out the views of their principals, on the importance of conveying "early religious instruction" (which the petitioners modestly represent as heretical and infidel) to the susceptible minds of the children. That is to say, as we understand it, the petitioners feel quite competent, in one of their accusations, to decide as to the minutest results of the instruction given in common schools; namely, that it fabricates fanatics, zealots, and little Lutheran dogmatists; and in another, immediately at its heel, and just as open to inspection, they are stone-blind, and capable only of giving utterance to a very profound inuendo. The petitioners had the good fortune to hit upon another capital topic of declamation, and we blame them for not making more of it.

It is suggested that the common school system is a dreadful thing for the children of the poor; yea, it is artfully contrived, the petitioners believe, to deprive them of the benefits of education! The poor, therefore, as the petitioners very ingenuously argue, naturally and deservedly, withdraw all confidence from it. What a gold-mine is this that we have struck upon in the very centre of Zahara, the very last place in the world where one would be looking

for ingots and solid wedges of the precious metal! How this argument in behalf of the poor—the children of the poor—rings on the tongue! It has the true jingle, there can be no doubt of that; and we are surprised that Messieurs, the petitioners, have not displayed more activity in circulating it. Holding ourselves subject to their supreme displeasure, as clippers of true coin, we must state a fact or two as to this very remarkable withdrawal of the confidence of the poor.

The whole number of children between five and sixteen in the state of New York, in 1837, was five hundred and thirty-nine thousand seven hundred and thirty seven; and the number instructed, five hundred and twenty-eight thousand nine hundred and thirteen; leaving a mere fraction of a fiftieth or sixtieth uninstructed throughout the whole state. Coming nearer to the question, we find that of sixteen thousand children taught at the public schools in this city, one thousand four hundred and eighty-eight, or about one tenth, are the children of laborers; one thousand four hundred and sixty-one, or nearly another tenth, are the children of widows; nine hundred and forty-five, shoemakers; five hundred and two, cabinet-makers; four hundred and sixteen, masons; five hundred and seventy-nine, tailors; four hundred and ninety-three, blacksmiths; while of clergymen there are but thirteen; of doctors, forty-four; lawyers, twenty-five; and sundry personages who see fit in census-tables, tax-gatherers' books, and subscription-lists, to return themselves *gentlemen*, are responsible for twenty six. These figures convey, we trust, a quiet rebuke to the petitioners, which should not be lost on them, unless they are determined to be deaf to the despotic voice of simple addition.

We come now to the second topic—the teaching of the children of the petitioners can not be conscientiously intrusted to the common schools. This charge is of the true Janus complexion; at one time it is alleged that the common schools are infidel, utterly void of religion; at another, they are ultra-Protestant; now Janus wheedles us with the great length and demureness of his Quaker or Presbyterian physiognomy; and then he alarms and terrifies us horribly by the distortions and grimaces of his hard, unbelieving countenance. Shifting and turning, and winding itself out of this syllogism into that; taking now one disguise, and now another, we confess we can discover in the whole of this application, nothing but a zealous, obstinate, and persevering purpose of using the public money for the furtherance of a certain class of religious tenets, and the advancement by the most strenuous agency, of the interests of an ecclesiastical corporation. It is, or appears to be, their conviction, that there can be, and their determination that there shall be, no schools without distinct religious beliefs—without their creed, their paternoster, their surplice, and their basins of holy water.

There is a class of people, we are aware, to



whose imaginations man can never present himself without his prayer-book, his collection of psalms, and his Sunday hat. It is impossible for them, by an unfortunate law of their nature, to contemplate him in any other than his strictly religious and pew-holding character. This, it seems to us, is narrow and unjust. There is a world outside of the walls of the sanctuary. There are many acts into which religion does not, can not enter. There can be no doctrinal truth in the structure of a clock—though it may moralize as wisely as the best homilist of them all; and but a slight portion of evangelical spirit in a pair of honest household bellows, for instance, although its lungs may blow as round a blast as any divine in the land. There is no such thing known among the plain, homely people of every-day life, as Catholic carpenters, or Presbyterian bottlers of beer, or Swedenborgian makers of windmills. One of Dr. Nott's stoves would dispense, we imagine, no more heat to an heretical Romanist, fire-deserving though his sins might be, than to a sturdy and conscientious Congregationalist of the true orthodox complexion; nor do we think that Professor Olmsted's patent would exhibit a greater alacrity in consuming a dissenting Baptist, than a full conforming Churchman.

It is the purpose of the common schools to create citizens and not Christians. Citizen is a lower degree, it may be, in the same school with Christian; and out of the wise and just performance of social duty—of obligation to men in communities—may spring, in due season, the higher order of sacred, Christian character. The Christian includes the citizen; but who is it that tells us, because this child, this little creature of the public goodness, has not been born with the vision of an angel he shall not be allowed to see at all; that unless his little eyes are made to look direct down the optical-glasses of this orthodoxy or that orthodoxy, he shall lie in the cradle of a helpless and idle imbecility all his life?

In this great question, the community, embodying itself in all its majesty and collected force, has a voice above all sects, all dominations, powers, and principalities. It demands for itself life without discord; it pleads for peace, free from controversies and schisms—that the great heart may be calm and serene, whence issue the social currents by which its children are nurtured and sustained.

It is not pretended—there is no charge against the School Society, as Mr. Hiram Ketchum suggests—that it has not performed the duty of furnishing a good, common, ordinary, literary education—that it has not given what it was bound to give—that it has not enabled the children to read, and write, and cipher. The petitioners demand more. Their ambition is not to be squared and measured by the ambition, humble and just though it be, of the other free citizens of this state. They clamor for higher nutriment; they stand on tiptoe, above all their

fellow-citizens, aspiring to catch glimpses of a celestial sapience denied to the vision of the little scholars, and the adult trustees of the public school. Yea, it would appear from one view of the subject, as we have already suggested, that the petitioners desire to have their peculiar religious tenets taught and disseminated at the public cost; that they claim the peculiar, and, in this country, extraordinary privilege, of dipping into the state treasury for the support and furtherance of an ecclesiastical establishment. They knew that the constitution of the land, the spirit of free institutions, stood between them and their object, and yet they push forward with all the vehemence of clamorous memorials, popular excitements, and public meetings, toward its attainment. Why, then, this urgency of petitions? They must have sought, it seems to us, one of two results. Either, firstly, the success of their application, from the show of numbers by which it was countenanced, in the very face of all constitutional objections; or, secondly, the disruption of the entire school system, not only here, but throughout the state, by means of a plausible outcry against its actual or assumed abuses. No false motive may have mingled in the attempts by which these results were to be accomplished. The petitioners may have been sincere, honest, patriotic. That we leave with God and their own secret thoughts. For the wilful violator of our constitution and established liberties, there is but one answer, and that is to be had in the field; but we pity, with the regard of a steady and sincere commiseration, the man or set of men who would, in sober reason, attempt by any means, or under any assumption whatever, to disband the five hundred and forty thousand youth of this state, who receive instruction at the public schools; who could look calmly on, while the heat of an intolerant zeal was dissolving the bands that knit them together into one large, innocent, and growing company; and could see them turning sorrowfully away from the old district schoolhouse, where some hope, some little ambition, had begun to dawn upon their minds, back to the squalid hut, or the cheap farmhouse, or the dark alley, from which all such hope, all such ambition, must be henceforth excluded for ever!

We hear much of conscientious scruples, in this discussion. To what purpose has conscience just now become nice and scrupulous? What portentous shape hath the goblin taken just at this time to shake its delicate fibres? Reading, writing, and the use of the globes! The little mimic ball, that humbly represents our planet, swarms with direful hieroglyphics; the twenty-six letters have formed themselves into a terrible regiment of black dragoons, and the unpretending school-slate, is one of the devil's cards in this profound game that is played to ensnare consciences and entrap the feet of the unwary. We can not say that we feel an extraordinary respect for any man whose conscientious scruples are found travelling on this road;

we are rather inclined to commend him to a dark lantern and the crutch of an octogenarian. Daylight and a swift pace, that keeps abreast of social rights, are no pleasures of his.

Conscience, sitting serenely in the breast of man, sagacious and austere, and lifting her terriole front against whatever debases, obscures, or mars the soul, inherits a noble realm of duty from which she can not be drawn to do task-work for hire, or favor, or the furtherance of a doubtful cause. She inspires scruples that speak out, in very audible tones, against the oppression of tyrants, the crafts of priests, the violences of wicked men, and not against the rights and immunities of humble children, pensioners on our bounty and justice for a few words of healthful knowledge. Doth conscience stand in the portal, rebuking common schools? What is there in all their wise and plain operations at which she can be justly affronted? The common school recognises a God, a conscience, and Savior; a Being that holds the ends of the wide universe together; a tribunal that arraigns the crimes and vices of men; and a mediator, pleading and interceding between the two. A Creator and a judicial spirit within us, all men will admit; and if any say they can not take cognizance of the great head of the Christian church, to them we make answer, in a merely secular view of the case, that it is through the imagination the heart is purified; and whenever they can present to our contemplation a nobler, lovelier image, and one more likely to arrest the regards of a wise and pure soul, we will, if the sternness of their exactions so require, have our Savior depart from the consecrated school-room, and hail with joy and earnest acclamation the advent of the glorious substitute.

We are not the apologists of the system of common schools. We are not even advised that it needs apologists or advocates. If it has errors and defects, let them be amended and removed; but unless objections to it more manly, and cogent, and more consonant to what has been considered the spirit of American institutions, than those urged by the petitioners in this ill-advised and unwarranted application can be advanced, we say, let it stand, grounded as the pyramids. Let it spread its wide base until it embraces the utmost verge of society; let its foundations be struck deeper and deeper, until they shall be known to rest on the great heart of the community; and let its turrets and its summoning towers ascend until they are lost in a tranquil sky, objects of steady admiration, exciting hope, and cheerful regard to all people that lie in their shadow, and within sound of the tuneful voices that echo from their walls!

### THE SCHOOL FUND AGAIN.

IT is the business of zealots and sectaries, as all the world knows, to be on the constant

hunt and look-out for a vantage-ground, for some little plot of the wide domain of passion and prejudice, that may be reclaimed for private culture and advantage. This purpose is accomplished, sometimes clandestinely, sometimes by creating an issue, in which they cause themselves, by a melo-dramatic dexterity of posture and aspect, to be regarded as maligned and persecuted. The tactique of the gentlemen in question—the humble petitioners for a portion of the school fund of New York—seems, however, to lie in the assumption of a tone and attitude of perpetual demand and requisition; to be constantly claiming, and in no very feeble or doubtful tone, some right or privilege that is their due, and which, so they protest and asseverate, it is a burning shame they are kept out of. They begin, perhaps, moderately enough; they object, it may be, at first, merely to a shoe-tie. The tie isn't in very good taste, it must be confessed, and had better be altered; and so it is, to oblige the projector. Then you must change the fashion of your hat, the cut of your coat. Then they get a degree closer, and require that you shall not wear your natural hair, but a bob-wig of their contrivance, and for which they hold a patent. Next, they would have you sway your body, thus and so, when you see a gentleman in a white gown, and hear him reciting something out of the heathen. They next require of you to be a little more guarded in your language; not to make quite so free with your spiritual superiors, and to bear in mind what is written in the fathers, or in a certain tract that they can mention, concerning the authority of those holding from the Pontiff. Then they would like to have you conform your mind—an easy metaphysical procedure—to the received doctrines, dogmas, and creeds of the church; and in the event of your declining to adjust your thoughts by the standards placed before them, you are invited out one clear sunshiny morning to take a ramble (with a goodly retinue of attendants and body-guard at your heels) to one of the public squares, pronounced a knave and a heretic in the face of day, and ere you can fairly discover what it's all about, they have given you over to the devil, and you are roasting and crackling in the flame, as merrily as a Christmas pig.

How is this extraordinary consummation effected? Simply by considering you as an idiot, without a soul or a conscience; quietly setting aside all your common-sense notions, as surplusage and impertinence; and by claiming for themselves the most refined sense of right and wrong, the most scrupulous and delicate moral convictions. It is an ordinary trick of self-seekers in society to secure to themselves immunities and privileges, by professing an extraordinary squeamishness of stomach, which relucats at anything less delicate than the bird's rump; a nervous dislike of draughts, which embowers them comfortably between ladies on a sofa; a constitutional susceptibility of vision, which is offended at the glare of nu-

merous lights, and which carries them home to bed as soon as the oysters and game are out of the way. These gentlemen always labor under the heavy affliction of conscientious scruples; constitutional impediments to enjoyment. Of agitation, they make a religious duty, part of a religious system. By constantly disturbing and alarming the community, they at length acquire, over its pursuits and objects, the influence which is conceded, out of mere weariness and physical exhaustion, to men of a restless and troubled temperament.

The present application is the boldest attempt, within our knowledge, on the part of a religious body, to interfere with our municipal affairs. The effort to procure a portion of the common school fund for private and sectarian uses, is nothing else than an invasion of the educational police, as it may be properly called, of the metropolis; an attempt to break down one of the strongest muniments that law and civil order have erected in our midst.

This is, in all probability, as resolute an effort as ever can be made to secure an appropriation of the fund for improper objects. The original petition strikes clearly home at the purpose in view; it was supported and enforced by some of their most ingenious and skillful debaters; and emanated from a body, whose numbers authorize them to say, that one third of the vagrant children, defrauded of instruction by the plan of the school society, are theirs; and who will, therefore, rest content with nothing less than a Leonine division of the booty. The fund, the fund in a currency of their own—they will even name the very marking of the bills—applied as they choose to require—they will have or nothing.

Through every thoroughfare, you will see hordes of little, tattered, unhatted creatures; the very champions of raggedness, whose flag-like garments flutter in every wind, and proclaim the triumph of a natural instinct for streets and open yards, over the seductions of tasks and school-rooms; these are the parishioners of the good Roman bishop, who vindicated their condition as one infinitely above the artificiality and heathenism of a public school.

Joyous, rampant, with all the little smiling seeds of heroic viciousness, lurking in their young bosoms, ready one day to bear the fruit of the stealthy or the bloody hand, and to blossom in dark alleys and by-ways, where crime patrols day and night; this is a more pleasing field of contemplation, than walls darkened with alphabetic characters, teachers, that, at a given stipend, inculcate infinite heresy, without so much as knowing it, with a comfortable climate, of stoves in winter, and sunny holidays between schools, out of doors in summer.

"Is it necessary to teach infidelity?" asks the Right Reverend advocate of the petitioners, before the common council. "It does not require the *active* process. To make an infidel, what is it necessary to do? Cage him up in a room, give him a secular education, from the

age of five years to twenty-one, and I ask you what he will come out, if not an infidel?"

Between these trowsered and turbaned little Turks without, and the rank and obnoxious, but, at the same time, well-taught and clean-apparelled infidels within, we admit it may be a sore trial to choose; but we must be allowed to confess, with due deference to the good bishop, that if he be right in his view of secular education, and in insisting, that the state should contribute to a proper religious training of her youth in sects; we are forced to confess that our government stands on no foundation whatever—rather on a foundation of rolling stones—and that the first tolerably muscular arm pressed against it, must, of necessity, throw it clean over, and tumble it among the rubbish of decayed states and mis-governed empires. If there can be no secular education, there can be no state.

In sober truth, we do not consider it necessary to inquire, at present, whether religion is an essential element of a complete and mature education. We oppose the petition, simply on the ground that it seeks to convert a tax, laid by the state or city government, to a religious and sectarian object.

If the public school society, as is asserted, were a monopoly; if it be irresponsible to the people; if it fail to educate the children of the poor, it could not affect the view of the question which we feel bound to take. All these considerations would operate most powerfully in procuring a reform of the school system in this city, but are by no means arguments that a corporation (one employing a public fund for religious objects) of a still more obnoxious character should be erected.

On this distinct position should all applications of the kind be met. It seems to us almost waste of time, to inquire into the matter more nicely. That the present application has been listened to calmly; met in protracted sessions of the city council and the state senate, by able men, in careful debate, and at length allowed to become a question in nominating committees, are proofs of patience and liberal forbearance, that could scarcely have been expected from the supposed eagerness and haste of our American temper.

If the whole organization of the public school society is to be changed, because it does not square with the idiosyncrasy of a certain class of citizens—a minority, in point of numbers, a miserable entity in tax-paying capability—why should not our entire municipal condition be changed?

The Jews, and with very great show of justice, too, may insist on keeping open shop on Sunday; cause a session of aldermen to be called at the hall, to consider some pressing grievance; order the omnibuses out (for one or two of them may seek to go a journey to Chelsea), and fall into a horrible ferment should all other citizens decline to take down their shutters and proceed to their avocations. The

Quakers will at once, and rightly enough, disband the military companies. The Cameronians or Covenanters, will destroy the ballot-boxes and have no voting under a government which does not publicly recognise the Christian religion. The Seventh-day Baptists—coming a little in conflict, it must be admitted, with their Hebrew brethren—will insist that the omnibuses be all laid up; the drivers taken down from their seats, and put away in a mow or manger, to enjoy their sabbath slumbers; would send the city fathers home to apparel themselves in a garb suited for church and the grave duties of the diaconate; and have every bow-window made close as a tomb. Nay, further; we can not see why the face of the city itself should not be subjected to constant changes, to accord with the temper or whim of any projector, if only sufficiently clamorous, whatever. The conscientious mathematician may demand that our public squares shall all be laid out in octagons and rhomboids; the oil-dealer, of an expansive soul, may suggest the doubling of the public lights, and a revival of the exploded custom of embellishing the mayor's residence with a pair of lamps; the delicate-minded tailor, insist that the city watchmen shall be put on the patrol in gaiters, and the latest Parisian curvettailed coats; then, the architect, pricked by scruples of conscience, may say that there is no religion in square church-towers, and cry out, with a lusty throat, for pointed spires, with the good gilt ball and weather-vane at top.

There is reason, truth, urgency, in these latter, as well as in the earlier requirements; but, casting down the Public School Society, in place of the old, disorderly pagan-breeding organization, what system is to be substituted? And how are the objects of a new mission to be accomplished?

They are "to be effected by depriving the present system, in New York, of its character of universality, and exclusiveness, and by opening it to the action of smaller masses, whose interests and opinions may be consulted in their schools, so that every denomination may freely enjoy its 'religious profession' in the education of its youth."\*

The secretary, the coryphæus of the new order of things, would fain map out the metropolis into an infinite number of little plots and subdivisions, each with a characteristic religion and discipline, under the governance of its own priests and teachers; here a little scarlet patch of Romanists, there a blue one of Presbyterians; a water-tinted subdivision for the Baptists, a sable plot for the African freeholders, a deep red and perdition-colored section for the favorers of endless punishment.

Now, does this learned gentleman, does any

citizen, of a taxpaying respectability of understanding, imagine that a community so diverse and heterogeneous, could, by possibility, hold together a twelvemonth? could last even through a single charter election?

There is no ground on which a community stands so comfortably together, as that of a common system of education for the mass; and whoever, by whatsoever indirection, would abolish or remove this, is, in truth, an enemy to society, and virtually proclaims the law of his own will and interest superior to the general welfare.

By what lines Mr. Spencer proposes to distinguish and separate his imaginary districts of conscientious friends of education, we are at a loss to conjecture. There are to be parishes, nice, charming sections and sub-sections, occupying a certain breadth or square dimension of the metropolis, in which the nervous advocates of sectarian instruction are to enjoy the advantages of the new system; to elect their own officers; to select their own teachers; and to take to themselves the immeasurable luxury of school-books, in which Ignatius Loyola and Cæsar Borgia are, as is proper, always spoken of in respectful terms. But let us consider, if one of the new academies dominates over a certain tract of city ground, it draws into its fold all that fall within its bounds; but are we sure they will come? May there not be, now and then, a stubborn recusant, a headstrong Protestant, perhaps, in a Catholic school-diocese (set apart by the most dexterous and accurate survey of the secretary), who can not be made to understand exactly why his child should be taught to believe in the pope because the Romanist is so delicately conscientious as to withdraw his faith from the old public school system. The Protestant may claim his right to swear by the public school society, quite as strenuously as his Catholic friend to invoke the Virgin, and to say yea and nay by the pater-noster.

Who shall run lines for the secretary, so as to bring in all that are of a mind, and nicely avoid striking anywhere against prejudices, religious whims, or, so called, conscientious scruples?

"If that society had charge of the children of one denomination only," says the secretary, "there would be no difficulty. It is because it embraces children of all denominations, and seeks to apply to them all a species of instruction which is adapted only to a part, and which, from its nature, can not be moulded to suit the views of all, that it fails, and ever must fail, to give satisfaction on a subject, of all others, the most vital and the most exciting."

This seems to us involve the fatal misapprehension (to call it by its best name), on which the application for a division of the fund is founded, namely, the notion that the Public School Society is, or should be, a religious corporation. Now, its objects and purposes, if

\* Report of the Secretary of State upon memorials from the City of New York, respecting the distribution of the Common School moneys in that city, referred to him by the Senate.—Albany, April 26, 1841.

we understand them at all, are expressly secular. Other they could not be, unless in direct contravention of our whole social compact. With such a view of their duty, we could have no school system, either district or metropolitan. The state can not know religion, save in one or two cardinal acts of worship, in its public conduct. But it can and will apprehend social necessities, that operate as links and ligaments in holding the community together. An education, essentially and primarily secular, is one of these. An important aim in any system of instruction provided by the state, would be to furnish a mass of ideas—a platform of general information—on which all could meet in harmony, and with a perfect concordance of sentiment and opinion.

That our government is republican, would be one of these; that it is a government of opinion, and not of superior strength and force, another; that it is a government allowing the widest liberty of thought and utterance, within the limits of good order, is another and vital sentiment.

That there was a council of Nice once; that Martin Luther bearded the pope (although an important historical circumstance); that Cranmer was burned; that the Geneva model of church government was first recommended to the Scotch in 1560, it cares nothing. The moment it listened to narratives like these, it would lose its dignity and character as a state, and would become, from that time forth, either a religious commonwealth, which is quite doubtful, or, most probably, a field of furious encounter, in which bigot would hunt down bigot, and sectary fly at the throat of sectary, with all the spirit and animation that belong to controversial feuds.

All that remains for the state to do, therefore, is to waive away, with a meän of majestic rebuke, conscious of the grave charge intrusted to her hand, all that would fain approach her, either in menace or supplication, for favors that conflict with this. This is the highest and noblest favor she can confer on her children. To give them the best, the purest secular instruction in her power, free from all taint of injustice or unkindness, toward this class or that; subject, of course, to whatever of frailty and uncertainty in attaining its objects, is incident to whatever is human. Let her not be for a moment lured aside from the great path of duty she is pursuing. Her march is on the open highway; and however pleasing or attractive may be the pastures of a selector and diviner knowledge, offered to her view by the magic lights of one school or another of philosophers, self-seekers, or truly good Christians, let her keep on her way, moving along with an ear and an eye, quick and apprehensive, for whatever belongs to her character as a state, but deaf and unseeing, where any would presume to make of her a gatherer of tithes, or an umpire between contending sects.

## THE UNREST OF THE AGE.

OURS is the age of suicide and mysterious disappearance. Some Jacob May or other going forth on a plain mercantile enterprise, thinks proper, for his private sport and entertainment, to hide himself for a season from the search of his friends; puts the police on the look-out; causes the river to be dragged; creates a horrible tumult of newspaper paragraphs all over the country; and, finally, turns up some quiet morning, walking the streets of New York or Philadelphia as placidly as if nothing had happened.

The truth is, custom and social usage sit hard upon men; and they strive to escape from them by every possible device and self-delusion. Some fly off into remote countries, and wander over deserts and burning sands to be free; others penetrate into remote seas, and sit down by shores where the tyranny is more tolerable because it wears a different garment and gayer crown. Others find relief in wild speculation; in schemes for forming society into parallelograms or rhomboids, and in contriving theories by which men shall get along without any society or organization whatsoever. Others again, can not trust themselves alone, and are scared mightily if they are discovered moving in any enterprise without the approval of multitudes. The restless spirit of the age separates men, on the one hand, into units, and makes them solitary and discontented; or gathers them, on the other, into noisy and tumultuous masses, shouting for change, reform, and progress. The world lives abroad, and is not to be found at home oftener than once a week, and then only if the weather is blustering and turbulent without. The domestic feeling—households—are in a measure abrogated, and men are to be found at clubs, lectures, conventicles, and other public gatherings. The action is all external and superficial; and the heart of society, the private home, has, in a considerable measure lost its life, and ceases to supply the vital circulation which society so much needs. The great number of violent deaths proves that the soothing influences of home and kindred are not felt as they should be.

Men can not keep hands from themselves. They wreak upon their own persons the wrongs and restless violence of the age, and take vengeance with the summary knife or cord on the disastrous spirit that rules the times. The blood of self-slaughter cries out on every hand; nothing, it would seem, can arrest its flowing. Peace and prosperous fortune can not stay the deadly hand; pleading wives and children appeal to it in vain, and religion itself stands dumb and awe-stricken in presence of the ghastly demon of suicide.

Men struggle with it, and wander up and down streets, and by the side of calm rivers, but the perturbed spirit will not rest. The monster can not be foiled, but must have his prey.

They fall on their knees, calling great God to help them quell the devilish thought; but it triumphs like a fate. They stagger before mirrors and glasses, to know if the sight of a human countenance—even their own, in this moment of terrible delusion—can not shame the fiend or scare him back. The next moment his unhappy dupe lies weltering in blood, with a prayerbook, perchance, grasped in his struggling hand, opened at the page which pleads that we may be “spared from temptation.”

Can an age or a country be right-minded and true, where such things happen? Is life so fearful a burden in this land of ours, that men should snatch themselves from it with insane haste, and post out of it as if it swarmed with hydras and chimeras? Is the sky murkier or the earth sadder here than elsewhere? Have men weightier cares or sharper crosses in this latitude than in Nova Zembla, or in the Friendly islands of the Pacific? Of cares and crosses, growing necessarily out of climate or condition, there are not; of hardships self-created, and bad passions, idly fomented and encouraged, a great plenty. We are mad for money, mad for office and empty power.

If we sought money eagerly that we might scatter it among the poor and needy, and make of its idle glitter a sunshine in dark places, the good purpose would sanctify the pursuit, and men would not go mad and take their own lives, however the enterprise might end. If we sought power over the hearts and consciences of men, and aimed to glide into their thoughts among genial influences, springing from a happy exercise of genius or virtue, it would be well, and the world would have good cause to honor our graves. But when wealth, interpreted, means bond and mortgage piled on bond and mortgage, and an excellent character at the bank; and power desires no nobler position than a high stool at a desk, in the department of state, or a sounding voice in the halls of political or religious strife—all is not well; but, rather, hollow, tottering, and unsafe, to him that ventures abroad.

The times do not satisfy the desires of the mind. The literal hardness, the prosaic austerity of the habits and pursuits of the age, furnish but little encouragement to the imaginative and aspiring part of the soul. Insanity, in many cases, suicide, and other terrible acts of desperation, seem to us the rebellious outbreaks of a nature wronged and tortured by the iron condition in which it is placed. Men know not what deep, overwhelming injustice they do to themselves in neglecting or disdaining the imagination. Slighted or kept under, it proves the most deadly foe of all the human powers, and bodies forth instantly, in vindication of itself, a hell gloomier than Dante's, and peopled with shapes twenty times more terrible. The human mind can not repose on facts; nor find permanent ease and security in the unadorned incidents of a life of mere business or action.

These are too definite, too readily summed up and concluded. The round is easily run, and the limit soon discovered. It needs something remote, uncertain, shadowy, and boundless, which shall operate as a perpetual stimulant to our restless nature, and a perpetual gratification that can not be exhausted. The remedy, then—a part of it at least—lies here; in furnishing occasions of enjoyment to the imagination, and in cultivating the arts and pursuits in which it is the chief element.

Paintings, in which the ideal world is shadowed forth, or in which the actual world is raised to the standard of a glowing or cheerful ideal, feed this passion with its best sustenance. A country blessed with a Raphael and an Angelo, is of a happier and more equable temperament, all other circumstances conforming, than one which has not a single great painter, and is compelled to point to its signboards for specimens of art. Pictures in which character is exhibited in grotesque or humorous phases, by relieving the mind from the painful pressure of rigid and exact life and custom, further this grand object.

On this ground can poetry be safely vindicated from all cavil and opprobrium. Poetry sends this hard, round, methodical world of ours, through the great void in which it moves, trailing behind it a glory and brightness, full of hope and cheerful auguries to men. The emanation in this case is mightier and fairer than its source; and we are taught by the sublime influences of bards and prophets, speaking and chanting in noble pages, that what is not is greater than what is or seems to be. A golden light, serene, genial, and blessed, is shot down from the bright world of romance and rapturous truth, in which we walk with a proud consciousness of a high, but as yet unseen destiny, and of faculties that yearn after something better and grander than the planetary crosses of the present life.

In the creation of character, too, of a purer and more chivalrous cast than that of actual men, literature is rendering a great service to the world, and drawing it away from the mean, petty usages, the degrading tricks, and gross customs of our everyday life. In the contemplation of these romantic portraiture, in the works of novelists and poets, the age finds relief, and forgets, for a time, the hardships of society, and the despotism of circumstances. Even where the writer adopts a contrary course, it is a satisfaction to the world to have a Squeers, or an Iago gibbeted high before them, in the full length of their desperate villany. These are their sport and pastime, a sort of lay figures to receive the heaped-up scorn and contumely of all mankind. In either event the object is accomplished, and the quarrel with bad fortune or cursed chance is for the time silenced, or turned into a more melodious and promising wrangle.

Let it not be said that the world's homage to men like Scott, and Dickens, and Wordsworth,

is extravagant or irrational. It is men like these, laboring for the purposes we have attempted to describe, that preserve the healthful action of the general mind, and furnish to many hearts consolations and solaces that could scarcely be found elsewhere, this side of scripture. The age can not do them too much honor, for they are the chief friends and benefactors of the age.

We do not pretend to say that in the cultivation of art and literature lies the sole remedy for the heavy evils that oppress the hour; but in them we find many of our faculties and passions wisely exercised, which employed in the common businesses and pursuits of the world, are degraded, abused, and misdirected, or imperfectly engaged, so as to create incalculable misery and crime.

The multitude of newspapers and new inventions, crowded patent-offices, swarming streets, and thronged rivers and mountain-sides, bear testimony to the restless spirit of the age. The world is at the top of its speed, and yet it industriously plies whip and spur, as if it thought itself moving at a snail's pace. The demands of trade and commerce will scarcely account for this. There is an unquiet devil at the heart of the times, which pricks them perpetually on, and makes of the whole race a sort of wandering Jewry, doomed to have no rest nor pause, until the hearse and the undertaker are at the door.

Of alarmists and preachers of agitation, we have sufficient; we need apostles of peace and tranquillity. It is necessary that the heart of the age should be soothed and calmed, and its vast activity turned to some better account than place-hunting and money-piling, the uproar of battle and the mad cries of trade.

The serene spirit that lives in good books, the music of good men's voices, the quiet shades of the sanctuary, and the sabbath stillness of thoughts above the age, should be sometimes sought, and would not be sought in vain. The consolations of literature and truth, imbodyed in paintings and many-colored pages by the master-hands of our generation, would not come to us without warning and encouragement, and we would not then dare to curse God and die, because life seemed to us without hope, and void.

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### OUR ILLUSTRIOUS PREDECESSORS.

AMERICAN antiquities have of late become quite popular. Relics and memorials found on our own soil are beginning to be talked of with the same degree of interest as if they had been dug up among the Picts, Pelasgians, or ancient Druids. Native pottery, of a thousand years old, has risen in the market, and while new temples of Christian worship are going up on every side of us, people begin to throng, in imagination at least, about the doors of those

sacred old edifices that stand on our southern and western border. The time may come when the Mound-builders shall be used to point a moral or adorn a tale, as well as Greek or Roman; and if a railroad should be struck through the heart of the Alleganies to the Atlantic, would it be wonderful if some tumulus of half an acre, superficial measure, should be transported bodily to the centre of Chatham-square, and employed as a pulpit for chaste political harangues, for denunciation or exaltation of sub-treasury, and the general discussion of finance and default. Mr. Delafield has done something, by publishing a gilt-edged quarto, toward bringing about so happy a consummation. If a book like his, or Mr. Caleb Atwater's, could have been placed in the hands of the first pilgrim that landed on Plymouth-rock, we think he would have stared a little. "A pretty new world!" he would have said, "where the whole back part of it is crumbling and falling in pieces, after this fashion!" Such is, in fact, the precise truth of the matter; and busy, active-minded men are now engaged in snatching such morsels from decay and utter extirpation as lie in their power. We trust that they will be cheerful and zealous in their labors, and not allow themselves to be discomposed or put out of countenance by an occasional draught of dry dust or sepulchral ashes. The work must go on, must be prosecuted, until we are assured how those martial old fellows, those antediluvian buck-eyes and hoosiers, the Mound-builders, carried it in their day against wind, tempest, heart-ache, and the "thousand pains that flesh is heir to." Let us know how they loved and made love, what grain they planted, how light was furnished, and how pew-rents stood, so far toward sunset, a thousand years ago. How they fought we know, for stout spears, sharp arrows, and helmets of proof tell the story, though the head that wore, the arm that wielded, and the eye that aimed, are long ago mouldered in the dust. Who was their great man in their palmiest day? Was he, Webster-like, of huge thews and sinews; or did he steal upon the nation in the dwarfish shape and guise of a Van Buren? Or were their politics, their parties and political divisions, based on some tomb-building question? whether man's last lodging should be round or square at top? with two openings or twelve?

Another question of vast importance, in which all Pearl street and half Greenwich has an interest, what ware did they use? what particular importation of crockery? Or were they in total darkness, entire ignorance of dinner dishes and tea-sets? No point has been more thoroughly vexed among the antiquaries than this; and we would respectfully suggest that a scholarship be founded by our merchants in that branch of business, to be entitled the delf or red-pottery scholarship, for the specific investigation of this subject. New patterns *might* be discovered, and trade receive a fresh impulse from the other side of the Alleganies



and the borders of the Oregon. How was business conducted among these old heathen? How was society held together? Were there such things as clubs, sects, friendships, among that bookless and unchronicled generation of men? Not an author among them, we are sure; not an editor or sonneteer, who has left a "file" or a stanza to enlighten us. Were bonds and mortgages and brokers known among them? or have these inventions come in since the flood? We do trust in heaven that further researches will not disclose to us (at that early day at least), the existence of a stock-market west of the Ohio; although we have a shrewd suspicion that some such startling truth will come to light, from the position in which many bodies are found on the banks of Marietta and the upper Wabash—namely, stretched at length under aged trees, with mouldered ends of rope or flax, or some material bearing a striking resemblance thereto, in close neighborhood with their necks. Fatal evidences, we fear, of fancy gambling and its logical consequences! Treading-wheels and stock-dealers we had hoped were contemporary.

Would the endorsement of one's name on the back of an oblong scrap of foolscap, subject one with that primitive people to the nuisance of a notary's clerk, subsequently of a notary himself, and finally to that prime pest and ornament of modern communities, a *practising* attorney? This instrument of torture, the promissory note, is perhaps to be referred to the same epoch as brokers and treading-mills.

Another point—where did their ancient legislatures convene? In the mammoth cave, or in some of the larger mounds? We think the latter might be recommended as an august and impressive place of assembling, to any legislative or other corporate body. Bones, death's-heads, grinning skulls, would preach nobly against rascality, bargaining, and corruption. No jobs could be managed in such a vicinity. Dead neighbors would lift up their bare arms and withered palms, to strike or deprecate bold or timid violaters of right and justice. As to the dress of these dumb and mummy mound-builders, can there be doubt? We may rest established in the faith that they did not wear swallow-tail coats, peaked boots, and stiff neck-stocks—did not thrust their shrewd sconces into that utter abomination, a black beaver noggin. They the rather flaunted it in loose, flowing robes, sandals, and majestic pagan turbans!

Furthermore, did they enjoy that noble annual festival, a charter election? When mound-builder rushed against mound-builder, and mummy was scurriously to mummy, that some little denizen of a pothouse might be alderman over a circuit of a dozen tumuli (in one of which he should be stuffed to-morrow), and conserve the peace against river-rats and ground-moles? Perhaps they had other and more stirring amusement, as their walls and covered ways would seem to indicate a pretty vigilant foe to be taken care of on the outside!

Can we think of this ancient, solemn, and buried race as enjoying parties of pleasure, tea-gardens, boating, rockets, and other frivolous diversions? Is the conjecture plausible enough to impose on our understanding, that juvenile mound-builders were in the habit of crowning the day with a "dash" out of town in a box, or pillory rather, suspended between two enormous fly-wheels, and careering it along the bank of the Mississippi, or under some jutting cliff of Allegany, at the rate of seventeen miles an hour, with a tandem of bison?

How does the notion strike us of one of these silent and reserved skeletons strutting a paved street, perfumed, gloved, and corseted? Will the imagination endure to think of a tomb-full of these interred and stately people, starting up into a popular assembly, and shouting their lungs in pieces to have a farthing taken off of beer, or a smirched bank-bill cashed in copper? Can we conceive of them rushing about in fragmentary hats and dilapidated waistcoats, spouting patriotism at taverns, and asking to be paid for it afterward?

To leave their sports and come to matters of a graver nature—much discussion has occurred as to the purpose or purposes to which certain round and square buildings of stone within their borders were applied. Some assert that they were employed as watch-towers to keep a look-out for an approaching enemy from the north or west; others will have it that they were light-houses to guide navigators over the prairies; and a third party (of a more serious turn of conjecture) assures us that they were built for no less purpose than the use of the reverend clergy, and occupied by them as reading-desks. Their supposed system of sun-worship, and out-of-door religion, lends some plausibility to this guess. We believe that these towns were built by the auctioneers, and were put in daily requisition by them in their ordinary course of business.

They had auctioneers; of that we are well-assured. No man with a genius for the business could have gone long without catching at the facilities for its prosecution afforded by tumuli, barrows, and stone-towers. Standing on one of these at noonday, he would as naturally lift his voice in the line of trade as an adult rooster from a wall.

"How much, how much! a prime yoke of bison! Two years old this season. Going—going. Now a dozen helmets; Sledgekopp's make; with bucklers and breastplates to match—cheap—going cheap, to close the affairs of a retired warrior!" This was on the day of sale; but how he managed to announce his auction, is not so readily imagined; whether by a boy hurried through the country on the back of a hackney buffalo, a punchy and full-winded older mound-builder, with a bell (as in our modern Boston, the creature of yesterday), or by the cheaper device of a flag thrust out at the top of one of the towers of stone.

The glorious wilderness of the mound-build-

ers appeals to us by considerations deeper and tenderer than these. In this fertile and flowing region, it is said, that first and happiest garden, the garden of Eden, once stood. Here Adam (if this pleasing conjecture be true) received the title-deed, the great fee of the earth, from his sovereign and paramount Lord; and in this selectest spot—one that should be consecrated in the hearts and memories of all the long generations of mankind—he first took by the hand the blessed creature, who made a paradise of all the earth when they were driven forth beyond their garden-wall. Cunning and excellent child of nature! who could not bear the circumscription of rampart and river, and who would rather sin and be free, than a blissful prisoner, tethered to happiness and spotless joys! Tread lightly, therefore, on the fair fields of the west; for you know not what ancient and cherished echoes may be slumbering in its cliffs and river-sides, nor how gently the fore-parents of us all are sleeping there!

#### THE FIRST PRESIDENTIAL DEATH.\*

DEATH has spoken to the American people in a voice of consequence and power he can not hereafter surpass. He has spoken from the Capitol, and standing amidst the highest memorials of authority this nation can know. There may not be in the voice an unrivalled depth of passion, nor a heart-piercing sharpness of agony, but all of force and solemnity to be acquired from high station, newness and splendor of office, and the sustained gaze of many millions of free people, sounds in the accents he has recently uttered. Poets and men of genius, in God's good time, will arise, and labor, and die a death that comes much nearer to the heart than this; philanthropists and prison-searchers, like Howard, and emancipators of men, will enter the tomb with a more tearful train; patriots, falling on the plain amid foes to civil liberty, and martyrs dying for conscience' sake, must shake the bosom with a profounder grief.

Nor was this death altogether wanting in incidents of an heroic description; up to the Capitol the good president marched, amid throngs of earnest friends, all eager to grasp his hand and cry out "God bless him!" as he passed; the benisons of thousands hung upon his steps, and he planted himself in the chief chair of state under many cheerful auspices and promises of good at hand; in three-and-thirty days he was laid out in the presidential mansion to receive callers; but no more to stretch to them the welcome hand, or cheer them with the joyous eye. A month's president—he came into power in a whirlwind, which subsided shortly into the low-whispering dirge of death.

\* William Henry Harrison, of Ohio, was inaugurated President of the United States March 4, 1841, and died the 4th of April following.

When we call back to our imagination the banners, the loud, free shouts, the boastful drums, and the choral songs of November, and see how they have died away into an April mildness of tears, and shrouded emblems, and slow mournful marches and processions, we learn that we live in two worlds that glide into and interchange with each other. Light and shadow never lay closer side by side. Assuming power in the midst of triumph and acclamation, our late chief magistrate laid it down in quietude and a solemn stillness never to be broken. The great robe of office changed, as of itself and with miraculous swiftness, into the silent shroud and plain bands of utter peace. We rejoice that the good old man is gone. The future time grows dark upon the view. What of discord, and war, and civil confusion, labors in the gathering cloud, God only knows. It was eminent good fortune, that he whose life had been happy and triumphant, should pass out of it ere its peace was broken by the sounds of alien hostility; or, to a true spirit, the more fearful murmurs of disaffection or distrust, from his own countrymen and people.

We rejoice that he is dead, inasmuch as this one death, high and lamented as it is, has consummated a great truth, and confirmed our faith in free institutions and free men. A change which elsewhere often wrenches thrones from their foundations, has here been wrought with the silence and dignity of a funeral pageant. The supreme power of the land has descended into the second constitutional hands—by no arrogant transmission of blood, nor insolent interference of armed men—without a pause or a murmur. Our faith in men, our reverence for the constitutional charter, have moulted whatever spot or soil they may have acquired in any recent mischances, and, new-fledged, ascend again, and with an undoubting eye dare contemplate the future in its most boding and disastrous shapes.

Never, we will venture to say, never was the attachment of a people to its institutions exhibited with more sense, decorum, and constancy, than in the present trial; never were the better elements of the American character evoked with greater success, although the lapidary hand that called to the surface the bright, new aspects and colors, was cold and deadly.

In a former article, illustrative of the incidents of the recent presidential canvass,\* we had occasion to speak of the employment of emblems and devices in furtherance of political or party objects. The same subject now arises with a less cheerful complexion; and the question at present is, how far the use of shrouded standards, badges, crapes, and printers' rules, as denotements of grief, is wise and necessary.

There is, unquestionably, a class of minds—men of refined or imaginative temperament—with whom they are not needed, whose delicate sense of sorrow is, perhaps, offended by the

display of any symbol or evidence of feeling whatever. They would enjoy their grief in silence, and cherish the dart that has pierced their breast, in secrecy and repose. They ask for no gloomy weeds, no sable hearse, no long train of mourners, no pomp of obsequies, or funeral observance. These, influenced by a true delicacy of feeling, perhaps, would not have the metropolis defile through its own streets in divisions of clergy, laity, magistracy, and soldiery; with sections and sub-sections, composed of ex-aldermen and ex-presidents, the horse of the deceased, led by his aged servant, an urn shrouded in black, and twenty-six pall-bearers, representing the twenty-six states of the Union. But it should be borne in mind that the class of meditative and thoughtful sorrowers for a public man is extremely limited; and that it is for the general mind, and for the purpose of stamping upon it a deep and salutary conviction of the bereavement, that these devices are intended.

The shrouded eagle brings home the pointed dart with double force to their bosoms; and the golden-lettered banner, blotted from the sun by dreary crape, makes thick and palpable the sense of their grief. The artisan, who would scarcely trouble himself with profound reflections that would justify lamentation, and whose heart is, perhaps, scarcely alive to the nice sensibilities that constantly vibrate and keep grief true to its object, as he strikes a blow upon the bench or the anvil casts his eye upon the dark band that encircles his arm, and feels, of a truth, that a great and good man has fallen. Keeping, therefore, this side of quaint and foppish distinctions, such as the wearing of the badge above the elbow for the military token of grief, and below it as the citizen's, we hold the influence of public ceremonials and appropriate emblems, justifiable and useful; the eye is fixed, the heart improved, and the memory kept fresh.

Depressed and humiliated by an occasion that towered too high for it to strike at, we rejoiced to see with what efficacy the evil spirit of party was laid and made to hold its peace for a season. Despotic, slanderous, Ishmael-like, and brazen, as it is, it could not keep its front amid the solemn scene, but slunk away from the fraternal obsequies, and crouching in the distance, sits at gaze, ready, we doubt not, to re-enter his realm at the earliest chance. Would that he might be made there to inure, a miserable exile, an outcast, marplot, and peace-breaker—for ever and ever. He has been no friend of ours; has done us no good service, that we know of, for sixty years; on the contrary, has not spared pains or toil to make us restless, embittered, and belligerent toward one another. Why, therefore, he should be permitted to put men together by the ears, to harass and excite them, from year's-end to year's-end, and from Maine to Florida, is beyond the power of plain sense to comprehend. Is this spirit so fierce and barbarian in his nature, that nothing

but skeleton hands can smite him dumb, and dead men's voices quell the devil that rages within him? Is no appeal sufficient which emanates from quiet firesides, the calm privacy of domestic life, past goodness, present worth, or future usefulness, that candidates for office must be assailed with demoniac energy and bitterness, and be made to repent the day they were rash enough to lend themselves to the public service? Does any one believe that our politicians and statesmen, our chief counsellors and advisers in critical affairs, are the gross, sinister, and corrupt men, they are painted in the harangues of partisan declaimers and the paragraphs of party prints? Does any one hold either party to be the jacobinical club, the mercenary junto, the base, false foe of our institutions, which its opposite charges it to be?

No, no. The silence and grateful reciprocity of an occasion like the late presidential burial, disclaims and repudiates any such belief as harsh and unjust; proves that the violence and fierceness of party are an unnatural and feverish condition of the body politic, and calls upon us from the very bosom of its repose and serenity, to make our political differences henceforth differences of judgment and opinion, and not of idle passion and insane perversion of character and truth.

Another kindred lesson we have been taught by this great event; that the American press possesses, under all its abuses, a profound sense of justice and right; that it is willing to be a co-worker with the public mind in the expression of humane and charitable sentiments, and liberal opinions.

Everywhere has it written of the recent death with forbearance, good feeling, and a proper regard for the charities of life. Back and forth through every part of the land have the mournful tidings been tolled and echoed; and the whole press has been but one continuous chime of melancholy bells, responding, iterating, and harmonizing with each other. Whatever errors of taste, or defects of mere critical judgment may be charged upon our journals, we have uniformly found them, apart from partisan bias, sound and clear on questions of morals, and just, so far as they were informed, in advocating the right and rebuking the wrongdoer. Certain ingrained abuses we fear there are, dark flaws of passion, and stains of prejudice and error, which we devoutly wish might be purged away; but for the good which it has done, we thank it, and trust it will date from the present hour its new calendar of kind offices, enlightened humanity, and temperate advocacy of truth.

The respect of republics for magistracy and constituted authorities can not be hereafter called in question. This, the first occasion on which the whole nation could unite to exhibit, by undoubted testimonials, their respect for the common head of all, has given birth to expressions of regard unprompted by precedent or prescription—for there were no such guides

in the present case—but flowing spontaneously from the popular heart. Nature spoke out from its own primitive shrine, suggesting, directing, and inspiring what was to be done, and the result was a simple and genuine homage worthy of a free nation. For the man, deep, earnest sorrow, we doubt not, was felt; but for the president, a sterner and more comprehensive regret. It was the great office distasteful that caused dismay, the sense of an awful bereavement, and general gloom. When the nation looked up and discerned a great blank in the firmament of its powers and principalities, whence its chief planet had departed, what wonder that it started back and stretched its hands to the heavens, in deprecation of the mighty Providence that had wheeled it from its sphere.

Standing at the portal of the tomb, and reverently regarding the illustrious dead, it seems to us as if a solemn voice issued forth counselling peace, fraternal love, amity with nations, and trust in God. Death has drawn nigh to us, and seems as if he stalked with majestic port across the threshold of our homes, and had seated himself by our firesides to read us a lesson from the great text-book of Providence which he ever bears in his hand. Oh, wiser far than all human scripture and black-letter teaching is the practical homily by which he informs us of the solemn requirements of duty, household justice, national purity, and, chiefest of all, of the eternal crisis toward which every man is hastening with that gloomy guide as his usher and chamberlain!

### A MOVEMENT IN CLERKDOM.

THERE is no example on record of a more successful rising than the recent one of the clerks of New York, to relieve themselves of the thralldom of overwork. From the beginning, it furnished evidences of a sure and ultimate triumph; first a speck no larger than a man's—no, not so large—no larger than a clerk's hand, appeared in one of the public prints, a mere paragraph; then the anonymous call of a public meeting; then the proceedings thereat, with a brief reference to several eloquent and masterly speeches delivered; a chairman's name appended at full length, in large, and two secretaries, in small type; then a petition drawn up, a delegation of clerks appointed to bear it before the masters—the mighty retailers themselves; and then, it sounded like a report of cannon throughout all clerkdom, four thousand strong,—victory! freedom! the clerks are emancipated, have accomplished their own deliverance, and shall measure tape and falsify colors no more, henceforth and forever, after eight o'clock, evening.

Now, as the stroke of the hall clock was on the VIII., there was a low murmuring sound heard all through the city, of keys turning in

great rusted locks; parties were seen strolling along—groups of two, or three, or more—looking back upon the barred door and closed bow-windows with an air of triumph, mixed with a doubt whether it could be so; whether that cursed old shop, that had eaten the heart of so many delicious evenings, was at length gorged and satisfied with twelve hours' work. Some of them, too, would stroll about the town for hours, in this same state of mixed wonder and pleasure, looking at all the long line of darkened shop windows; and when this sport was at an end, fairly exhausted, some would betake themselves to this resort, some to that; part to oyster-houses, to eat shell-fish against each other, for the charges; some to lectures, some to concerts, and not a few to bed, to dream about a clerk's paradise, where all the employers—it may be supposed—are turned into shop-boys, and made to serve the clerks with innumerable spotted neckcloths and endless yards of light drab, for pantaloons, day and night.

The tumult could scarcely be expected to end with the dry goods clerks. The fire spread. The hardware clerks, notwithstanding the severity of their vocation, were the next to catch the contagion; summoned their general meeting; had their masterly speakers, and resolutions of pith and supplication; their committee, their petition, and *Io Pæan!* they, too, are enfranchised.

The next thing, news came in that Newark had risen—the respectable and potent burgh of Newark, New Jersey—that she had burst the shell, and struggled to be free.

This spirit of emulation and public commotion so operated, at length, upon the boot and shoe clerks—a class slow of thought, and heavy-heeled in the march of reform—that they, too, raised the banner—supposed, at the distance from which we watch the fray, to be a cordwainer's apron—rushed into the *melée*, and bore off, with surprising resolution and good fortune, a counterpart of the clerks' free charter—*Magna Charta Clericorum*.

Then followed the hatters' clerks; then the jewellers'; and then came limping along, last of all, the maligned, abused, and miss-called fry of cutters' and clothiers' servitors. From quarter to quarter, the excitement spread, the spirit of resistance was aroused, until at length the whole realm of clerklly life was in motion.

Petitions flowed in apace; masters yielded; shop after shop was carried, as if by storm; and darkness, as of an eclipse—a great gloom preceding the dawn of all clerklly joy and happiness—came over the city as the fatal hour of eight was struck.

Notwithstanding the formidable array thus presented to the masters, and the fulminations and threatenings of the aroused populace of clerks, a few were fool-hardy enough to resist their demands. Here and there, through the chief streets, a stray light was seen twinkling, and forms gliding back and forth behind counters—the ramparts of the tyrannical masters

—busily engaged in discharging yarn-balls from boxes; accumulating on the counter-scarp, as it might be, material for demi-cannon sleeves, and other hostile offices. This was, of course, not to be tolerated for any great length of time. At first peaceable measures were adopted, to drive them from their position; they were only called vampyres and monsters, by anonymous writers in the newspapers. Then a significant hint was given out, to the effect, that if they, the retailers, set any value whatever on their show-windows and specimen-patterns, they would look out for themselves. One correspondent—the most vigorous and Saxon of the clerky penmen—in a private communication to a merchant in Chatham street, wrote, “I would merely say to you to begin with, that you had better look out for your glass, if you want to save them from being smashed; moreover, you had better look out for your head, if you want to save that, as this course of yours will *not* be allowed.” And, true enough, a night or two after, a small body of resolute clerks was seen marching up Chatham street—staggering to and fro, as if laboring up against a terrible burden of oppressed feelings—along Chatham Row, and getting abreast—as nearly so as their feelings would allow them—of the fork of Centre street, moved down, with terrible directness, upon a shoe-shop that was burning away merrily, without a thought of what was approaching, two revolving lights, and three stationary, at the rate of more than half a foot of gas an hour. In a trice there was a crack, as of glass shivering; then another; then crack again; a missive glanced past the head of the shop-keeper’s daughter; the shop-keeper himself is struck, and has fallen; his head-clerk, a chicken-hearted youth, who, from very fear and poverty of spirit, had refused to join in the movement, has crept into the bowels of the big boot for a shelter; a dead silence ensues, and with one good, round shout, the assailants swept out of sight.

These outbreaks were, however, only few in number, and of temporary duration. In a short time, so successful, as we stated, at the outset, was the rising, that not an obnoxious light was seen burning; not a shop-window was left to assail; and with a complimentary announcement of the names of all who had come into the new sumptuary regulation, the conflict was, in a great measure, at an end. In the mind of the observer and the philanthropist, a startling question now began to put itself.

How is this mighty mass of disbanded activity to be employed? What shall be done with it? Flushed with a victory, so recently achieved, it is not likely they would subside at once into the habits and usages of ordinary life. It was suggested, that there were the military companies, not under the best discipline in the world, to be re-organized; that the ardor, so triumphant in the late rising against the masters, might be turned to account in drills,

target-shootings, fence-exercise—that is, forming a mathematical straight line against a wall—and other martial divertisements. A taste for colors, derived from their day-light pursuits, and the habit of marching up to a counter, and keeping in a line with it all day long, it was supposed, would give them peculiar advantages in this new enterprise. A battalion of four thousand spruce clerks, marching, by night, to the sound of flutes and soft recorders—with both of which, habits of nightly serenading make them familiar—was a spectacle that many hoped to see. This would not do. There was another occupation, in which they might embark which would afford a vent for the roused spirit of the reformers. There is a grand modern specific for all possible ills; a creature of all-work, equal to any task that may be laid on it. It builds ships and steam-boats; can put a custard on one’s plate, and a patch on one’s trowers, free of charge; opens and closes theatres; buries one man in Potter’s field, at will, and builds a monument half way to the stars over another; is regaled on strawberries and melons, the first of the season; has a voice in every company—heard above all others; hangs this man; is at the heels of that, all through the Union, turn wherever he may; makes zanies and idiots, by its “so potent arts,” of wisest men; and elevates to the chair of Plato and Socrates the merest dolts and madmen. The combined wisdom and resolution of the metropolitan clerks, therefore, fixed on a NEWSPAPER, as the representative of their enfranchised activity; and before us now lies, wide-awake, and coiled for a spring, the latest offspring of the hundred-headed press—The Clerk’s Gazette. The two numbers under our eye give evidence of what is called a healthy, moral tone, and exhibit qualities which must be a source of infinite satisfaction to their friends and patrons. “We have,” says the Clerk’s Gazette, No. 2, “youth and enthusiasm, hand in hand with talent, energy, and experience!”

Now if there be any one thing that pleases us more than another, or all others, it is to see a public journal conducted with this species of modest assurance. Nothing can be, certainly, more satisfactory to a subscriber, than to know that he has the honor of perusing the lucubrations of a Solomon every morning; and nothing can be more charming as establishing a frank and candid communication between writer and reader, than to have the editor furnishing, six times a week, or oftener, a regular and exact inventory of all the traits of his character, the little personal peculiarities so fascinating among friends, so agreeable in a select domestic circle; how much more entertaining and piquant when blazoned in print!

“The next number of this journal,” quoth the Clerk’s Gazette, “will be the best that has appeared. We have said it.”

That we like. It is short and terse; comes to the point at once, and promises, without

halting, that the Solomon of Wednesday last shall be, by Wednesday next, thrown completely into the shade, made quite an idiot of, by the revised, improved, and regenerated Solomon, now on his way, with a new number of his journal under his arm. *Macte virtute!*

The war waged with the masters is at an end, and this—the Gazette of the conflict—seems destined to acquire for the combatants, laurels grown in a more peaceful soil—a garden-plant, whose root is refreshed and enlivened with ink, instead of blood.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the revolution, so imperfectly narrated, has our best wishes, that it may be as permanent and enduring, as it has been sudden and decisive; that the hours rescued from the gymnastic and toilsome

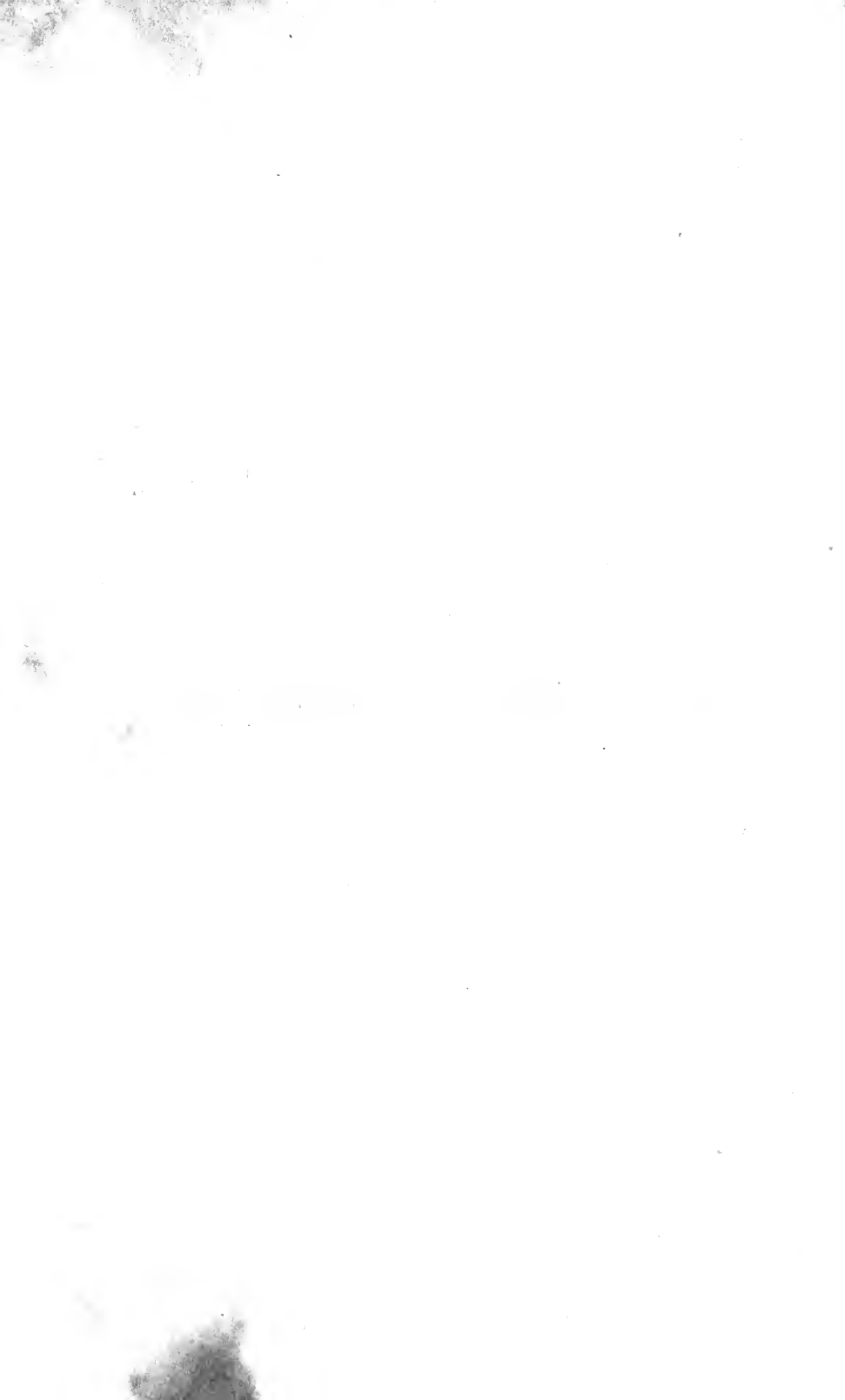
exercise of counter-crossing, may be devoted to pursuits, at least as graceful, if not quite so profitable and remunerating. The clerks of the great metropolis of New York, are a formidable body; they have shown, by a single shaking of the mane, in the recent struggle for liberation, of what effects they are capable; and it only remains for them to carry into other employments, the same sagacity in undertaking, the same energy, force of combination, and public spirit in prosecuting, and the same firmness and wisdom in securing a good result—as in the recent movement—to acquire for themselves the character of setting their hand to no plough that does not go through the furrow triumphantly to an end; of raising no shout or battle-call, that is not musical with the very notes of victory.

• END OF SELECTIONS FROM ARCTURUS

INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT.

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# INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT.

A SPEECH  
ON  
INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT,  
DELIVERED AT THE  
DINNER TO CHARLES DICKENS,  
AT THE CITY HOTEL, NEW YORK,  
February 19, 1842.

THE president (Washington Irving, Esq.), having proposed the sentiment, "International Copyright—It is but fair that those who have laurels for their brows should be permitted to browse on their laurels," Mr. Cornelius Mathews responded:—

I answer your summons, Mr. President, under some restraint. I am not quite sure that it becomes me, an humble lay-brother of the order of authors, to trouble a diplomatist and Spanish minister, in any way, with the insignificant affairs of the fraternity. But when I recollect how the distinguished gentleman on your right, a monk, at least, if not a bishop, has been lately received in this great city of ours, I am reassured. Knowing how you, once an honored member of the craft, are going forth from the country, its ambassador and representative, and how he, a man of letters, in full communion with the brethren, has just entered it—I think I may venture to say a word or two of rights which you hold in common. In speaking on the subject of an International copyright, at this time, I would not be understood as being moved by any new impulse or sudden enthusiasm; but as uttering convictions carefully considered and long entertained.

That I am speaking in the presence of an eminent foreign writer—the universality of whose genius, appealing by its delineations to all classes and conditions of men, would seem to entitle him to a universal recognition of his rights—will, I believe, by no means diminish the force of what I may say.

It is argued sometimes, I know, that authors have no rights; and a paper-dealing tradesman

of this city, greedy of some sort of renown, has lately contended if we could but get English books at the cost of type and paper (the author being considered an impertinent third party), all the ends of good literature would be answered. I might ask this artful casuist, how it would suit his convenience—he being a man of some stamp and character among his neighbors—to come abroad in the open light of day—in a coat yet odorous of the fingers of the petit-larceny thief; a hat savoring of the burglar's fist; his pockets jingling with the transferred coin of a bank robber. But I look beyond this miserable economical subterfuge, and seek, somewhat farther down, the actual operation of an uncopyrighted foreign literature, reprinted without restraint. There is at this moment, waging in our midst, a great war between a foreign and a native literature. The one claims pay, food, lodging, and raiment: the other battles free of all charges, takes the field prepared for all weathers and all emergencies; has neither a mouth to cry for sustenance, a back to be clothed, nor a head to be sheltered.

The conflict between a paid literature and an unpaid, is a fierce one while it lasts; it can not last long. The one relies on the feeble and uncertain impulses of authorship; the other is driven on by all the restless interests of trade. What, sir, is the present condition of the field of letters in America? It is in a state of desperate anarchy—without order, without system, without certainty. For several years past, it has been sown broadcast with foreign publications of every name and nature. What growth has ensued? No single work, so far as I can see, has sprung up as its legitimate result; no addition to the stock of native poetry or fiction; no tree has blossomed; no solitary blade struck through the hard and ungrateful turf. Whatever has been produced has been in spite of opposition from within and without; has been the bright exception, not the rule. Instead of being fostered and promoted, as it should be, our domestic literature is borne down by an immethodical and unrestrained republication of every foreign work that will bear the charges of the compositor and paper-maker.

Under the regulations of an International

copyright, the work of a British author would be published here in its order; would take its chance with other works, native and foreign; would be valued and circulated according to its worth; and would hold its rank in due subordination to the judgment passed upon it by the side of other compositions. What is the case now? A new work by the author of "Charles O'Malley" reaches this country—a pleasant, lively, vivacious picture of Irish life and dragoon service, well worthy of being printed by some prominent house, furnished to the libraries, and put into the hands of a liberal circle of readers, in due course of trade. This would be proper and natural. On the contrary, twenty, yea, fifty or a hundred hands—for the giant of republication is single-eyed and many-handed—are thrust forth, spasmodically to clutch the first landed copy; it is followed, watched to its destination; violent hands are perhaps laid on it, to snatch it from its first possessor; it is reprinted; early copies are despatched into the country; new editions follow, in pamphlet, in book, by chapters in a thousand newspapers; the land is vocal with the unrestrained chuckle of the daily and weekly press over this new acquisition; while no other writer, whatever his merit, if his popularity be but a degree less, is listened to. What hope is there here for the native author?

The odds are tremendous; and I do not hesitate to say, sir, that if he had thousands to lavish on the printing of a single work, a press in every village, a publisher of enterprise and spirit in every city, the purchased control of fifty newspapers, he would be only beginning to enter the field on anything like fair terms with Dr. Lever. The one literature, the foreign, is propelled through the country by steam, the other, the native, halts after on foot or in such conveyances as a very narrow purse may bargain for. Principles, it may be, alien to our own, travel with the speed of lightning, while national truths, in which we have the profoundest interest, follow at a lacquey's pace behind. As an American I feel this and I avow it. From the contemplation of that distinguished author, glorying in the zenith of a reputation universal as the light of day, my eyes turn away, and in the sequestered retreat, in the cramped and narrow room, seek that other brother of his, poor, neglected, borne down by the heavy hand of his country, laid like an oppressor's upon him; and I feel that the conditions of human life are hard indeed. Far be it from me, sir, to indulge in idle repinings over any of the inevitable sufferings of authors or of men; farther be it from me to cast any shadow upon the general joy of this occasion; but I feel it my duty, as I trust in God I always shall, to say something, wherever I can, in behalf of the victims of false systems, the children in this case—the orphans, rather, I might say—who inherit the wide kingdom of thought, and who toil bitterly in secret, in labors not seen of the eye, that the

world may have enough of mirth and cheerful truth to make the day wear through. Standing here to-night, the representative, in some humble measure, of the interests of American authors in this question, I say they have been treated by this people and government as no other of its citizens; that an enormous fraud practised upon their British brethren, has been allowed so to operate upon them as to blight their hopes and darken their fair fame. They have remonstrated, and will, until the evil has grown too great to be encountered, or is subdued. I might speak especially in behalf of the company of young native writers, who, seeing how well the world was affected toward good literature, and moved by some kindly impulses of nature, may have hoped in their way to add something to the happiness, something to the renown of their country. But we are advised how others, who thought they had secured a constant and enduring hold on the public good will by past character and services, have also been affected by the present injurious state of affairs.

You, sir, for example, in that retreat of yours, classical in the world's affections, having matured a work of some value and which you think ready for the metropolitan market, take passage down the Hudson in company with one of your farmer neighbors, who has, perhaps, just fattened his fall stock to a grain—with your manuscript in your pocket—recollecting, too, that in times past, your handicraft has been held in some repute—you flatter yourself you will find a prompt purchaser for whatever you bring. You call, sir, on certain traders in — street, you suggest the MSS. "For heaven's sake, Mr. Irving," is the response of the blandest member of the firm, the one that talks to the authors, "don't plague us just now; we have a profound respect for your talents, an ardent affection for American literature; but Mr. Bulwer's Zanonis has arrived, and we must have a hundred hands on it before night. Call again, we shall be happy to see you!"

Then, sir, meditating on the patriotic courtesy of the gentleman you have just left, you shape your course toward a great publishing house in Broadway; famous heretofore for a certain solidity and selectness of publication, but having been lately bitten by the Number viper—which, by the by, is encompassing the earth, like the great snake of the Hindoo mythology—they beg you with some natural tears in their eyes, not to interrupt them just then; "The big papers, the mammoth press, is on the alert; they must have 'Handy Andy' on the counter by Saturday or the tide will be down with them;" and behold, sir, the author of the Sketch Book, the illustrious historian of New York, very much in the situation of the ostrich of the desert having an egg to lay, but nowhere to lay it; and, like it, I might add, greatly disposed to hide his head for very shame. How has it fared sir, in the meantime, with your sturdy neighbor and his charge? In ro-

bustious health, cheerful of spirit, with no misgivings whatever, he makes the voyage to New York; remembers many a hearty welcome, many a lucky market in times past; and has no sooner touched the wharf, then he is seized upon by a dozen or more red-cheeked hucksters, who well-nigh embrace him from the joy they feel at his coming; he runs hastily over an inventory of what he has brought—so many turkeys of a year old, so many spring chickens, so many cocks and hens, and before he has had a chance to unbutton his overcoat, his merchandise is off his hands, and he casts about in his mind at what comfortable chop-house he shall hold an interview of settlement, and reckon his gains over a snug meal and a glass of choice cider.

Now, sir, I would ask, is not your brood of speckled fancies, as honestly begotten from the beginning, as his parti-colored capons? Are not your historical truths as solid and substantial, as real to the mind as his gross-fed turkeys to the body? Are not your racy courses of humor as much a solace and comfort to the soul as his web-footed waddlers to the palate? The property is as real, as actual in one case as the other; and why should it not command its price? That, sir, is a wretched country, or a wretched condition of things, where the best products of the best workman in any department are not in demand. And it is just so here at present.

The public taste is so deeply affected by the interested laudations of inferior authors by the republishers, that the value of literary reputation, as well as literary property, is greatly impaired. No distinction is made between good writers and bad; they all appear in the same dress, under the same introduction; and the judgment of the general reader is so perplexed that he can not choose between Mr. Dickens and Mr. Harrison Ainsworth—between the classical drama of Talfourd and the rapid farce of Bocciault. As this system deepens and strengthens itself, as it does every day, an American celebrity will cease to have any semblance of the discriminating applause of a “contemporaneous posterity,” and be regarded only as the confused shout of a distant crowd. I know that to many of our trans-atlantic brethren their American reputation is dear and valued; and for their sakes I would not have a system endure by which its worth will be so surely diminished.

This brings me, gentlemen, to another aspect of the cause I am pleading with you. It has been matter of surprise in some quarters that Mr. Dickens, a British writer, has addressed the American people on the subject of copyright. Amid the happier visions which have crowded his English chamber for the last five or six years, are we quite sure that no corsair face has ever looked in?—no eager visage of the ink-stained pirate; with a hand stretched stealthily toward the MS. on his desk, to snatch

it away ere it was dry, and blazon it throughout the whole New World, as an acquisition honestly made? May not his brightest hours have been darkened, at times, by the fancy of a grim row of republishers rising before him—line upon line of readers, beginning at the Atlantic and stretching to the very verge of Oregon, with lines crossing them from Penobscot to the Mexican Gulf, all busy in the self-same task, turning page after page of what he has written—roaring with laughter, melting in tears—until the contemplation of it (with the thought that no honest penny was gained to him by all this pleasant show that was going forward) has become actually painful to his mind? And when, landing on our shores, those very readers, many of them, drew nigh and took him by the hand—in a very earnest friendly grasp, too—and made solemn vows and protestations of friendship—was it less than natural that he should speak to them, in the confidence of frank discourse, of what had so often pressed painfully on his thoughts?

He was among brethren, in his own younger brother's house, and because he ventured to speak of a patrimony they held in common, with a like interest as himself, shall he be condemned?

But all this broadens into a general question, and one to which we are bound to give heed. I will take it for granted, sir, that every gentleman within hearing of my voice is aware that fifty-six British authors—and among them many that have given lustre to the age—applied to the American congress for an international copyright, and were refused. I will also take it for granted that every gentleman here admits that there may be a good indefeasible right and property in a book as in any other state. By what casuistry or jurisprudence does that which is property in one latitude in one civilized country, cease to be property when transferred within the limits of another?

The most precious property of one country in another, as I regard it, is its books. To us, what is Germany, half so much as Goethe? Greece, but Homer? And England is nearer and dearer to us by her long array of great writers, than by the constant intercourse of commerce, the closest compacts and treaties of amity. Her writers ask that this claim should be allowed; that all the relations of the two countries shall not be reduced to a gross, material standard; but that they shall have a property, as they have a right, in whatever of noble sentiment, of enduring thought, they may impart to us; and that we shall have a like property with them. That we have heretofore enjoyed their labors free of charge, is nothing; that we have lived on their free bounty for a long time, creates in us no claim—as it should no desire—to become perpetual almoners of theirs. A true spirit of national fair-dealing, not to say national dignity, would impel us to

disclaim the charity, and persuade us to purchase what we read, as well as what we eat and wear.

I have said nothing, sir—and I might have said much—of the mutilation of books by our American publishers—that outrageous wrong by which a noble English writer, speaking truths in London dear to him as life, is made to say in New York that which his soul abhors. This sir, silent and uncomplaining as it seems, is a despotism as gross as that of the rack and the thumb-screw, which wrings from men under torture, falsehoods to flatter the tormentor. What right have I, sir, to stifle the utterance of any manly spirit—to offer him opportunities of speech, and then, in bitterest mockery, abridge the truth he would deliver? Soul speaks to soul through all distances of time and space; and accursed should he be that ventures to thrust his uncouth shadow as a softening medium between the two! We have friendly treaties, Mr. President, by which property and person, as commonly acknowledged, are sacred between the two nations. Is it not worth the while of statesmen and legislators to incorporate hereafter a provision by which the great rights of thought, of the soul speaking in its highest moods, shall be cared for and guarded?

I desire to see the two sections of Anglo-Saxon literature on either side of the great ocean moving harmoniously onward; they giving to us whatever they have of maturity and art, and we returning, as we are bound, all of freshness and vigor with which a new world may have inspired us. I desire to see something of the great debt, now accumulated for ages, which we owe to the brotherhood of British writers, cancelled; first, in the true honest currency of dollars and cents; known to the union as the representative value between man and man; secondly, in works of genius, the growth of our own soil, colored by our own skies, and showing something of the influences of a new community, where nature comes fresh and mighty to her task. A thousand voices now slumber in our vales, amid our cities, and along our hill-sides, that only await the genial hour to speak and be heard. Silence would no longer brood, as it now does, over so many fair fields, nor, "moon-like, hold the mighty waters fast." Allegany would have a voice, to which the metropolis, with its hundred steeples and turrets, would answer; gulf and river, and the broad field would reply, each for itself, until the broad sky above us should be shaken with the thunder tones of master spirits responding to each other; the whole wide land echo from side to side with the accents of a majestic literature—self-reared, self-sustained, self-vindicating!

I offer you, Mr. President—

*An International Copyright*—The only honest turnpike between the readers of two great nations.

## AN APPEAL TO AMERICAN AUTHORS AND THE AMERICAN PRESS,

### IN BEHALF OF INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT.

GENTLEMEN:—You have the credit, at this moment, of ruling the world—at least, your part of it; and can not yet enact a single statute by which your share of worldly right and profit shall be secured to you. Walking, in the world's eye, as strong and beautiful as angels, you can not perform the day's work, counted either in money or in bill-making influence, of a rude Missourian or a lean Atlantic citizen.

Aiding, as you do by your inventive genius, in all the great enterprises of the day; pushing forward every great and good undertaking to an issue of success; you lack the will or the skill to create a simple mill-contrivance by which your grain may be ground and bread furnished to your board.

You project, but do not realize. You sow, but do not reap. You sail to and fro—merchantmen and carriers to all the world of thought, the whole ocean over—but find no harbor and acquire no return. How much longer you will consent to keep the wheels of opinion in motion; to do the better part of the thinking and writing of these twenty-six states, without hire or fee, it rests with you to say. I merely put the case to see how it strikes you.

I address you in the mass, writers of books and framers of paragraphs together, because, at bottom, all who wield the pen have interests in common, and because I am anxious (I confess it) to have the whole force of the press whatever shape it takes, combined and consolidated against an injustice which could not live an hour if the press knew its rights and its strength. The rights and the respectability of the one are, in the end, the rights and respectability of the other; based in both cases on the worth and dignity of literary property.

No community is secure, it seems to me, where any law or fundamental right is systematically violated; either by instant vindication, through blood, and pillage, and massacre, or by the more silent and deadlier agency of the opposite wrong, and a whole brood of fierce allies sprung from its loins, is this truth, at all times, asserted and made good. From the original wrong, lying in many cases close to the heart of society, there spreads a secret and invisible atmosphere of pestilence, in which all kindred rights moulder and decay, until their life at last goes out, at a moment when no man had guessed at such a result. Neither statesmen nor people are, therefore, wise in tampering with a single principle, or in yielding a jot of the immutable truth to plausible emergency or the fair-seeming visage of an immediate good.

The law of property, in all its relations and aspects, is one of these primary anchors and fastenings of the social frame. And what evils, I am asked, have grown from the alleged neglect of literary property? I will mention one, by way of illustration.

You are all of you aware, by this time, that the extensive printing and publishing establishment of Harper and Brothers, Cliff street, New York, was burned in the early part of June, and that a heavy loss accrued to them from the burning.

The fire was attributed, immediately after it occurred, by the public prints to the hand of design. "It is supposed that one object of the incendiaries was to obtain copies of a new novel by James, of which the Messrs. Harper had the exclusive possession." Another paper enlarges this statement; "We see suspicion expressed that the object was to get possession of a new novel, 'Morley Earnstein,' which was in sheets, for cheap publication." Here is a natural, logical sequence, and just such a one as might have been expected. If the conjecture should not prove a fact, it ought to be one, because this is just the period and the very order in which we might expect an incident of this kind to occur—perhaps not on quite so large a scale nor with the necessary melo-dramatic admixture of fire. It might have been a plain burglary, prying a warehouse door open with a bar, for a copy; or knocking a man over, at the edge of evening, and plucking the sheets from under his arm.

Piracy and burning are perhaps so nearly akin that, after all, they have wrought out the sequence more naturally than if it had been left to the friends of copyright to suggest to them in what order they should occur. In Elia's legend a building is burned that a famishing China-man may have roast pig; in the reality of the present fire, a publisher's warehouse was put in flames, not only to prevent a famishing author from having roast pig *in presenti*, but also, by a decisive blow, to further the good principle that there should be no roast pig, nay, even salt and a radish, for famishing authors in all future time. Let it not be said I press this point, a mere surmise, too far. Surmise as it is, it receives countenance and consistency from a previous fact, namely, that one of the large republishing newspapers was charged not long since by the other—and this was made a matter for the sessions—with the felony of abstracting the sheets of an English work from the office of its rival. This, an invasion of property, is only one of the external evils growing out of a false and lawless state of things. Of others, which strike deeper; which create confusion and error of opinion; which tend to unsettle the lines that divide nation from nation; to obliterate the traits and features which give us a characteristic individuality as a nation; there will be another, and more becoming opportunity to speak.

As it is, by fair means or foul, the weekly

newspaper press, with its broad-sheet spread to the breeze, is making great head against the slow-sailing progress of such as trust to the more regular trade-winds for their speed. And this, fortunately (as error can not long abide in itself), is creating changes of opinion of infinite advantage to the great cause of international copyright.

A little while ago we had the publishers petitioning and declaiming against an International copyright (I forget what arguments they employed), and, lo! their breath is scarcely spent when the ground slides from under them, and the whole publishing business—at least, a considerable section of it, which they meant to uphold by false and hollow props—has tumbled into chaos, and an organic change has passed through the world of publication. Now they begin—and we are glad to have so powerful and so respectable a body converts to our side, on whatever terms—to see the matter in a new light. The affection for the people, and the cheap enlightenment of the people and the people's wives and children, which they made bold (out of an exceeding philanthropy) to proclaim in marketplaces and the lobbies of congress, is wonderfully dwindled.

It is not a pleasant thing, after all, to have one's printing-house and bindery burned to the ground, even for so laudable an object. Suppose we have the law; a little civilized recognition of the rights of authors (merely by way of clincher, however, to the absolute, primary, and indefeasible rights of publishers) might be an agreeable change from this barbarous system of non-protection. The old plan, it must be admitted, has its disadvantages. Let's have the law. And here you may suppose the hats of certain old, respected, and enterprising publishers, to rise into the air, in a sort of fervor or ecstasy, which it is entirely out of their power to control.

Is there, or is there not, a property in a book—a primitive, real, fundamental, right in its ownership, as in any estate or property? Often and clearly as this question has been determined, the opponents of a law, by stress of argument, are driven upon denying it over and over again, and making use of every sort of ridiculous and irrelevant illustration to crowd the right out of the way. They fly into all corners of creation in pursuit of an analogy, and come back without as much as a sparrow in their bag.

One of them, for example, says, "We buy a new foreign book; it is ours; we multiply copies and diffuse its advantages. We also buy a bushel of foreign wheat, before unknown to us; we cultivate, increase it, and spread its use over the country. Where is the difference? If one is stealing the other is so. Nonsense! neither is stealing. They are both praiseworthy acts, beneficial to mankind, injurious to nobody, right and just in themselves, and commendable in the sight of God." This reasoner, of a pious inclination, and most excellent mor-

al tendencies, has made but a single error. He thinks the type, stitching, and paper, are **THE BOOK** ! He forgets that when you buy a book you do not buy the whole body of its thoughts in their entire breadth and construction, to be yours in fee simple, for all uses (if you did the vender would be guilty of a fraud in selling more than a single copy of any one work), but simply the usufruct of the book as a reader. Any processes of your own mind, exerted upon that work or parts of it, make the result, so far, your legitimate property, and is one of the incidents of your purchase. To reprint the work in any shape, as a complete, symmetrical composition, is a violation of the original contract between the vender and yourself; whether it be in folio or duodecimo, in the form of newspaper or pamphlet, there lies **THE BOOK**, unchanged by any action of your own mind. The wheat, of which you have purchased the bushel, in the meantime, has been sown in your field (there's a difference to begin), which has been prepared by your plough and plough-horse for its reception, the kindly dews and rains of heaven, which would answer to the genial inspirations and movements of the mind, in the other case, descend upon it; it is guarded by walls and hedges from inroad; the weeds and tares which would fain choke it are plucked out by a careful hand; at last it is reaped and gathered in by the harvestman to his garner.

The one bushel has become a thousand; but it has passed through a thousand appropriating and fructifying processes, to swell it to that extent. It has not been merely poured out of one bushel-measure into another bushel-measure.

Though the one plough the earth, and the other plough the sea, the world will recognise a distinction, a delicate line of demarcation, between farmer (man's first occupation) and pirate (his last). The republicans—the proprietors of the mammoth press—groan under the aspersion of piracy and pillage laid at their door. They complain of the harshness of epithet which denounces them as Kyds and Mac Gregors. They must bear in mind that authors and republicans are likely to consider this question from very different points of view; that the poor writer, regarding himself as defrauded of a positive right and of a property as real and substantial as guineas, or dollars, or doubloons, may feel a soreness, of which the other party, living as he does on the denial of that right and the seizure of that property, without charge or cost, may not be quite as susceptible. Let us make an effort to bring this point home to these gentlemen, in an obvious and intelligible illustration.

How would the worthy proprietors of "The Brother Jonathan" like it, if, when their edition of Barnaby Rudge or Zanoni had been carefully worked off at some expense of composition, paper, and press-work, and lay ready folded, in their office for delivery; how would they be pleased if just at that moment, when the news-boys were gathered at the office door

pitching their throats for the new cry, a gang of stout-handed fellows should descend upon their premises and without as much as "by your leave," or "gentlemen, an you will!" sweep the entire edition off—bear it into the next street, and there proceed to issue and vend it, with the utmost imaginable steadiness of aspect; with an equanimity of demeanor quite edifying and perfect. Why, gentlemen, to speak the truth plainly, you would have a hue-and-cry around the corner in an instant! Your ejaculations of thief, robber, and burglar, would know no pause till you were compelled to give out for very lack of breath; and the whole community would be startled, at its breakfast the next morning by an appeal to its moral sensibilities so loud and lightning-like, that the coffee would be unpalatable and the very toast turn to a cinder in the mouth.

Now it should be borne in mind that the large weekly press, whose influence we are anxious to counteract, and whose interest is rapidly becoming the leading one in opposition to the proposed law—has arisen since the agitation of this question; has embarked its capital, and has grown to its present power and influence in the very teeth of a solemn protest of the authors whose labors they appropriate. It should also, in fairness, be added that some members of this huge fraternity only avail themselves of the law as it now stands, as they think they have a right, and hold themselves ready to abandon the field or adapt themselves to the change whenever a new law requires it; in the meantime meeting the question fairly and reasoning it through in good temper. The very paper which I have employed in illustration is chargeable with no offence against literature, society, or good morals, save the single taint of appropriating the labors of authors without pay, and defending the appropriation as matter of strict right and propriety. Only in a community where a contempt for literary rights has been engendered by long malpractice could such sentiments have obtained a lodgment in minds of general fairness and honesty.

If the hostility to a law of reciprocal copyright be as deep-seated as is alleged, why has there not been some able argument (raised above sordid considerations and looking wide and far upon the question in all its vast bearings), expounding to us the grounds on which this professed antagonism is based. When we ask them for a syllogism they give us an assertion. "My dear sir, how can you waste time, perplexing yourself and the public with this barren question! We supply readers with a novel, a good 3 vol. novel, for a shilling; and as long as we can do that they will remain deaf to all your appeals. The *argumentum ad crumenam*, the syllogism of the pocket, has in all ages carried the sway!" This is the head and front of their declamation, of their invective and their facts. This is the fact! This boulder (offered in lieu of bread), they beg us of the



author-tribe to digest; this is their bulwark, their fortress—no, their burrow rather—into which they skulk at the approach of a poor author, quill in hand, prepared to drive off the game—*feræ naturæ*—that lay waste his preserves and make free in his clover-field.

Now of all arguments this of Cheapness is most questionable and unsafe. It has a comely and alluring visage, is smooth-spoken and full of promise, but we must have a caution where it may lead us, for it is as full of trick and foul play as a canting quaker; as precarious a foothold as the trap of the scaffold the minute before the check is slipped! Cheap and Good are a pleasant partnership, but it does not happen that they always do business together. Taking cheapness as our guide and conductor, we can readily make our way, in imagination, to a publishing shop where the principle is expanded into a pleasing practical illustration. The shop is, of course, in a cellar (rent twelve shillings a quarter); the attendant is a second-hand man cast off from the current population of the upper world into this depository (wages four shillings a week); his hat, being still on the cheap tendency has followed him out of Chatham street, in company with a coat rejected of seven owners the last of whom was a dustman, vest to match and boots borrowed of a pauper (cost of the entire outfit five shillings and a penny); behind a counter that totters to the earth at an expense of five pence or more for repairs, he dispenses the frugal literature of which he is the genius—the paper being of such an exquisite delicacy and cheapness that a good eye, by glancing through, may read both sides at once; the purchaser plunges down with a sixpence (most economical of small coin) in his pocket, and bears off, in a triumphant apotheosis, four-and-twenty columns, to be read by the light of a tallow twopenny that sputters cheapness as it burns. This is the glory of the age; the crowning honor and triumph of America. Who would have the heart or the hardihood to blur that fair picture of popular knowledge and cheap enjoyment? Why, sirs, to speak a serious word or two in your ear, this plea of cheapness—a miserable escape at best, where a question of right and wrong is concerned—pushed to its extreme (and as cheapness is urged as the sole criterion and measure of advantage we are warranted in so doing) would drive literature to the almanac, which can be afforded at a penny; and the age of the brown ballad would return upon us in all its primitive graces of an unclean sheet, a cloudy typography, and a style of thought and expression quite as pure and lucid.

Pass a copyright bill and we are told “we should soon learn the difference between £1 10s. the London price of Bulwer’s *Zanoni*, and the American price of 25 cents.” How long—it is also triumphantly asked—how long would our “reading public almost commensurate with the entire population continue at such a rate?” What if it did not last a minute?

Truth and honesty are of a little more worth than a reading public even as wide as the borders of the land. Of the elevation of the people—the instruction of the people—I hold myself a friend, no man more, but I do not propose to begin their enlightenment with a new version of the decalogue, so amended as to admit all the opposites against which it is directed, as virtues which we are enjoined to cultivate.

Suppose these gentlemen do furnish good literature at a low price by dint of paying the author nothing, they should bear in mind that there is a place where it is paid for, or it would most assuredly prove as miserable as it is cheap. The literature is valuable not exactly because they spread it before the world in large sheets every Saturday morning, at sixpence a copy; but because there happened to be in another country certain enterprising publishers, of a somewhat different stamp, who thought it worth their while to cheer the writer in his labors, by paying him a good round sum for his copyright. I repeat it, an unpaid literature can not contend with a paid one; nor can it—while money is a representative of value and a motive for exertion in all other pursuits—be as good. Do I imagine then that an international law will create great writers? Not at all. Under any law—oppressed by whatever bondage or tyranny custom chooses to lay upon them—men of great genius will struggle into light and cast before the world the thoughts with which their own souls have been moved. They will speak though mountains pressed upon them. But there is a wide class—composing the body of a national literature—who can claim no such power; essayists, philosophers, whose impulses are not great, periodical writers, all are silent when the law and the trade fail to befriend them. It is these that need the constant stimulus, the genial inspiration (denied to them in any great measure by nature), of pay. It is the shining gold, decried it as we may, that breeds the shining thought.

It may be asked how does this question affect the press? The press, forming a part of the great body of writers, is affected by whatever affects the writers of books; for the bond by which the entire brotherhood is held together is so close that it can not be struck in any part without feeling the shock in its whole length. The same injustice by which the author falls in station and place, drags down the journalist. The rights of all who use the pen are rights in common; varying only in degree and as they may be affected from time to time, by circumstances of the hour or day. Beyond this the actual and immediate pressure of a vast amount of reading from abroad, poured upon us without limit or regulation, begins to be felt by the daily and weekly press; they find attention drawn off from the article or political speculation in their own columns, prepared with care and judgment, to the cheap re-print; and are driven upon abandoning the

field or joining in a pernicious system of unpaid appropriation against which their better judgment revolts.

I now close this appeal, and in doing so I would venture to urge upon you the importance of concert and a steady action in behalf of this law, at all times and in all places where you are called on to employ that sacred instrument of thought, whose immunities are so grossly outraged.

The popular mind has, in this country, made wonderful advances in the appreciation of political truths and principles. There is no reason why it should not make an equal—though, perhaps, a later—progress in truths that relate to literature and art. The popular mind, as all our institutions require, is essentially just and true; and, once enlightened by a sufficient array of facts and with time to arrange and digest them, will act with energy and wisdom on this as on all other questions of which it is the arbiter. Depend upon it, this bill, although adversely regarded by your senate and representatives at this time, will ultimately triumph. It will go up to the senate-chamber, year after year, with new facts, pleading for it with an urgency which considerate legislators can not resist. In the meantime it is your duty, as I trust it is your desire, to enlighten the general mind as to the truths on which I have ventured to insist. Seize the instant. In town, in homestead and city, let these principles be spread as wide as the writings they would protect; and search, with a fearless eye, the national heart, to find whether there be not some kindly corner where it is willing the seeds of a national literature should be lodged. Speaking in the accents of persuasion with which God and nature have endowed you, and through the organs of opinion which every one of you may, more or less, command—you can not be long resisted. Together in a phalanx, before which kings and princes grow pale, enter upon the mighty task. Hand in hand, voice answering to voice, in tones of mutual trust and cheerful hope press forward in the noble labor to which you are summoned. That union which, in politics and war, is strength, will prove in literature, as well, your champion and deliverer.

NEW YORK, *June*, 1842.

## THE BETTER INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY,

IN CONNEXION WITH AN

## INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT.

*A Lecture delivered at the Lecture-room of the Society Library, Feb. 2, 1843.*

From the moment when the peak of Harvard college, in New England, cut the sky—twenty years only after the first permanent foot was planted on the continent—America was predestined to be a nation of readers. That early

promise and destiny she is amply fulfilling. She reads in the cradle and the college; in the packet and upon the highway. The doors of a thousand lyceums are cast open and readers throng in. She reads in the hut, the tavern, and the stage-coach. She pauses at the corners and reads again; and as the swift spirit of steam snatches her from her feet and bears her away, she still turns the page and reads what she can. Her youth, her manhood, her age, are all busy at the task. Her decrepitude and her strength, her pale scholars and her carmen—sturdy and gowned as well, are classmates in the common pursuit. The forms are full wherever the eye ranges; and the rustle of leaves, as they turn, fills the air, from the schoolhouse on the edge of Memphremagog to the deck that floats upon the Mexican gulf.

It is therefore of vital consequence that she read aright. Having no central standards of opinion, no fixed classes as examples and guides, her mind is the result of a constant intercommunication of part with part, section with section, through the press. The general sum of her reading represents and controls her thoughts, her habits, and her government. Her institutions, modelled originally on the necessities of her situation in place, time, and progress of opinion, must be either sustained by a literature (meaning by literature in this connexion, whatever is circulated in a printed form) assimilating with these, or be modified by another literature which is too rigid to coalesce, and strong enough to break in pieces and appropriate to itself whatever it approaches.

It might happen, for a time, that the outward form of government, and daily habit of action would continue, while the mind, the heart, and spirit, would be changed and strangered within. A dreadful spectacle. A great nation staggering on, by a sort of instinct, in its old paths, blind, purposeless, maniacal! The body retaining its springday vigor, lusty, full of an ambitious strength; and yet, within, a mind at jar with its powers—working through all the limbs a deadly change, and giving to its aspect the look of one who wanders in the dark, by the edge of stormy seas, that may swallow him up, or among enemies, whose cold shadow he feels stealing upon him, to stab him if he pause.

The education of the American people lies, after all, in what they read; the soul, that governs its acts, enters through the eye that dwells upon the printed page. Now, in its growth, in the susceptible and plastic period of youth, it should have a wise regard to the influences to which it subjects itself; most of all to such as steal upon it in silence and without warning of their approach.

Out of the past come voices of triumph and encouragement; in the future gleam eyes of hopeful invitation and welcome; but the present, the time that is upon us and about us, is thick-set with dangers. A steady foot, a regard fixed constantly upon the true lights and standards of our course, can only carry us for-

ward. We should not wander into other spheres, into other quarters of the sky, to take an observation of our path. Over our own home lies the heaven to which we must look for guidance and for omens.

As a great nation, standing in the very front rank of the guides and examples of mankind, America should desire to possess a literature, whether foreign or native, only under the broadest and clearest sanctions of right and justice.

Already it is whispered through the world that she is false to the high faith she professes. It is muttered from corner to corner of Europe that she can violate, on the very spot made sacred by many trials and sacrifices of an heroic stamp, the clear obligations of man to man, community to community. She owes it to herself and to the great cause of which she is an acknowledged representative, to stand forth, and, gathering her pure robes about her, repel, by instant action, aspersions so unworthy of her faith and her fame. When I think of America, as she should be, she always rises before me a majestic personation—colossal, steadfast, heavenward and noble in her look, and towering infinitely above base usages and habitudes of gross creatures. But when I regard her in some of her acts, she seems shrunken from these great proportions, crouched meanly upon the earth, and peering, with a starved and guilty look, among cinders and fragments for some pittance, which she would fain clutch and guard as a precious inheritance. It has been said that England should place this question of the author's right on the true ground before she claims anything at our hands; that she should recognise, as she has failed to, the perpetual, indefeasible right of an author in his work, before she demands any part of that right from us. What matters it to us whether England or all the world fail in justice, shall it stay us in the path of truth and duty? We have not withdrawn into this new world, far from the strifes of old centuries, packed close with usage and injustice, to be cumbered with the doings or undoings of others. We are here, between ocean and ocean, to lead a life as pure, to administer examples as great, as God grants us strength to render. If we are the first to restore to an injured class rights long withheld, to place the author upon his feet, to clothe him in the garment that becomes his station and pursuit—so be it! We can claim no higher honor, no profounder glory, than to have so done.

A gentleman who has acquired distinction as an historian, lately standing in a lecture-desk, in this city, expressed a doubt whether there could be a property or exclusive right in intellectual and spiritual results. Thoughts and ideas were of a part with the sun and air, as free and universal as they. Now, it must have been within that gentleman's knowledge, that the sun and air themselves, when incorporated in specific results, certain chymical compounds, for example, can be subjects of property as clearly as a hat upon one's head, or the house over

us. He must have known, also, as a wise and diligent reader of scripture, that there are distinctions of person and character, even among the spiritual beings of a higher world, some being ranged in classes and others known specially by name. The very angels have an identity of their own, in act and thought, over which they may be supposed to exercise the control of intelligent creatures. On this very truth, that each creature, each angel, and each man, has an individual property in whatever constitutes his better being, hangs the immortality of the soul itself. If thought were held in common by all mankind, there could be, in effect, but one man—one being with multiform limbs and organs and a single soul, in possession of the globe. It is in the doctrine of a personal identity, an individual and exclusive right to certain elements and issues of thought and feeling, now and henceforward for ever, that the pains and penalties, the hopes and alarms of a present and a future being have their hold. This new dream of the universal commonness of soul and thought, would fill the universe with God and void it of his creatures. One should have a care, in indulging the speculations of so boundless a philanthropy, upon what shoals he may be driven! It may cost a greater outlay of wind and sail to get back, than the original chart of the voyage contemplated!

If I may throw open literary property to all the world, why not all other property? If there may be an allowable agrarianism of ideas, why not of acres and tenements as well? What would be the result if all the farms and estates in America were to-morrow made common, we can, in a measure, guess. There would follow, as these very reasoners should know, a grand disruption of society. I have a shrewd notion, that the gentlemen who claim to have thought out the author's book in common with him, employing him only as secretary to the commission, may be of the very lineage and creed with those who claim as a right one eye of the author's spectacles and one sleeve of his coat. The world has not yet answered to itself in the consequences, for the unjust distinction it has chosen to make between the property of the head and the hand. Not a slight part of the disasters of kingdoms, in later times may, in my humble judgment, be charged upon the unjust and uncertain tenure by which authors and governors of opinion have been allowed to hold their rights, and the false conditions under which they have, on this account, labored. The world prospers best when to each man it allots his right and protects him in it. Sooner or later the right here, as always, will vindicate itself.

I warn you, I warn you not to withhold this law. There are portents already in the sky; sounds, echoing audibly along the earth; voices in the air, that tell us that the thoughts of two nations can not mingle and become as one without law, with impunity. The quick ear catches the clashing of hostile opinions afar off.

the eye, strained anxiously upon the future, discerns floating into the horizon a dark hulk of alien thoughts, which, bearing down upon its dear and deep-freighted hopes, with a shock silently given, strikes them to the bottom and rides smoothly over their wreck.

I do not deny, I would not be so understood, that the noble literature of England, old and new, introduced among us under the sanctions of justice, and with a proper recognition of the author's right, would be of eminent service to the American people. We have arrived at a point in the progress of the world, where it becomes us to make use of every help, lawfully within our reach, to sustain us in the position we would maintain. What there is in that literature to cheer, to enlighten, to move, and sustain, the spirit of a great nation, no man here need be told. Every footfall within its sacred range, answers in an echo of proud remembrance; every hand laid upon its records, returns us from the leaves a musical and familiar voice that binds us there. But if on every page there lies spread the palm of the purloiner; if in every path we encounter the face of the republisher without right; if, at the bottom of all, there lurks a wrong and an injustice, depend upon it, so surely as the great heavens are over us and the great rivers by our city-walls flow to the sea, we will grow, truly, none the wiser nor prosper the more, by every or any English book that comes so branded to our hands. It may be good, noble, lofty; may carry us, seemingly to the very heart of truth, the very heaven of all pure fancies; but while enjoyed under these false conditions, all our profit will, somehow or other, and according to an everlasting law, turn to loss; all our progress bring us back, through a blind round, to the dull goal from which we set out.

To bring these considerations to bear upon the immediate question of an international copyright, I first remark, that an inevitable proof that the present system of relying upon and appropriating a foreign literature is false, lies in the vast number of minor evils (which, like the testimony of circumstances, can not err) to which it gives birth.

What is the process by which in regulated times and countries where the cheap enlightenment of the people is not a theory of publishers, a book is brought before the world? Not assuredly in a spasm—such as nature gives when she throws off her evil humors—but by some kind of orderly procedure. The work having grown up in the author's mind, slowly and with a calm reliance, it might be hoped, on a just judgment from his peers, is announced as on its way to the public eye. Attention is fixed upon it from that distance; if a work of research, the studies of scholars and men of letters are made to run parallel with it, and when at length it is yielded to the world, it is received with no idle and boisterous haste, but becomes the subject of a close analysis and deliberate opinion. At all points the author's

rights are regarded; having grown up under the author's eye from the beginning, his fame is well considered; and in the end the book takes its place according to some standard of judgment among others of its class. All this is and has been from the earliest time reversed in America. Here an author is an anomaly; a needless excrescence of nature; a make-trouble and mar-plot, a mere impertinence. A book is supposed to grow up by some sort of spontaneous process beyond the seas, and to be imported into this country with rutabaga and the yellow hop. Pursuant to this enlightened and liberal view of the matter, there were established, a good while ago, certain baronial castles, keeps, and places of look-out, whence the respective masters might look abroad, each upon the domain he had engrossed. There was the barony of Cliff-street on the one hand, which included the Pelham vineyards, the barony of Chestnut-street, Philadelphia, which overlooked the Waverly manors, and the Boston barony, with extensive water-rights and rights of piscary (as the courts say) in Marryat. Nothing could be more cheerful than to see the various lord-heritors of these great domains ascending to the castle-top, and with a lordly and benignant eye, regarding the toilers in their respective grounds so nicely parcelled off.

"Ah, ha!" one of them would say; "see how the sweat pours from old Sir Walter! That's a sturdy old fellow, and the blades grow double wherever he treads!"

The Post captain drags the net and ploughs the sea quite as satisfactorily; and Sir Edward Bulwer, being of a lighter build, makes up in activity what he lacks in muscle. Could anything go on more agreeably! Certainly not, as long as these book-barons understand each other; but every now and then they must have a frisk (getting jolly on the good wine served to them out of authors' skulls) and harry into each other's fields with a vengeance! Then there's a time! Such a crying out of courtesy and lack of courtesy! Such a babblement of rights and usages! Such a devout and monastic horror of the infringement of publishers' privileges all through Cliff street and Chestnut and Washington, it makes one's blood run cold to think of it! And among them all is heard every once and a while the tenor of Sir Edward Lytton, the piping cry of the Captain, or the feeble voice of old Sir Walter, growing every moment fainter, beseeching, in heaven's name, to be thought of in all this fray to the amount of a day's wages or two, and something to keep the life in them while they are in the field!

Certainly, certainly, this is an anomalous case for logicians of an ordinary understanding and discernment to deal with. Here, it is alleged, that the principals, the authors themselves, have no rights whatever in the products of their brain; yet, somehow or other, it happens that their agents, factors, and underlings, acquire through them and their labors some

sort of rights about which all this pother of usage and courtesy and publishers' privileges is kept up! Why, it is as plain as the north-star, nay, as plain as sun and moon, that if the author was rightless in the premises, his subordinate must be so cumulatively. No matter. In the very midst of these difficulties there came upon the field a gigantic fellow, who, with great eyes that saw everything and swaggering stride that trampled on everything, (pausing only long enough to blow himself out to his full dimensions) advanced, and in the very style of the famous Welch giant, announced that "Her could do that herself." And so it proved; he could not only do that, but a great deal more. Instead of claiming a plot or parcel of the country, this champion at arms set up at once a right to the entire continent; instead of addressing a note of compliment—as the old barons occasionally would—to the gentlemen beyond the water, asking to be allowed to import their products, he cut the matter short by laying violent hands on them before they were well through the custom-house; in fact, the blustering new comer went on at such a rate that he fairly deafened and distracted the old lords-heritors; and by the time a year or two had gone by, they were driven to their wits' ends.

Who knew but if he continued in this fashion much longer he would have the very castles down about their ears? What was to be done? Why they must meet him in his own style of windy bravado, and to save their towers from coming down about their ears, and to keep him at a respectful distance, they were compelled to wrap them in flames—to break into them with powerful burglars—in the newspapers, every time a new consignment came to hand! Notwithstanding their manifold resistance, the giant and one or two big brethren that joined him, came after a while to have it all his own way. He began to issue bulletins too—to warn trespassers off of his premises, and to hold out to the populace the promise of an unlimited vintage from his orchards. Every week there was open gate, when all the vassals and dependants of the giant rushed in and were fed at Sweeney's charges. The worst of it was, this fellow was as full of tricks and balks as an old horse; he baked portentous loaves it is true, but then with a big knife that hung in his hall, always ready for use, he served them such slices and sections as he thought proper, expanding or abridging the segment, according to his whim; and all this was done with a racket.

Now, a book—the staple of the giant's dealings—being a quiet creature, predestined to hold a perpetual dumb intercourse with the world, its birth might be expected to be orderly and noiseless. On the contrary, its entrance into *this* world at least is attended (under the giant's auspices) with an outcry that a sultana elephant, or tiger-mother of Bengal, panged with young, might envy. The country is taken by storm. The streets of cities are filled with

a flying squad of newsboys. Seaboard and landward swarms with agents and outrunners. The decks of steamboats, the pouches of mail-stages, cars of railroads, swell with the baggage of the invader. Flags and placards fly in every direction announcing that the enemy has landed. The city is harassed and kept for nights sleepless by reason of the new troops turned up in their ominous yellow or scarlet uniform, quartered within their threshold. Publishers, from a tranquil and slow-moving people, grow suddenly excited, hurry-scurry hither and thither, make yard-high announcements in the newspapers and on the fences, of impossibilities achieved or to be achieved by them; and unless they attain a circulation of fifty thousand, which gives them a glorious opportunity to abuse the author and make good their bank-account, would go out of the seven precious senses (perhaps there's an eighth in such cases) with which Heaven has endowed them.

Now, I venture to doubt, with due respect for the talent at appropriation and business enterprise involved in these proceedings, whether all this hurrah of literature is of much actual service to the country. As a display of ingenious jugglery by which an early copy is landed and of physical force in hurrying it through the press, no American can fail to regard it with profound admiration. But when one comes to consider that the work in question may reach the printer's hands in the morning, and the reader's at night of the same day; that it may possibly contain (as does one of these documents now before me) a careful and deliberate assault on the doctrine of voting by ballot and universal suffrage, or as does another, an assertion that America is stocked with white villains, or another, filled with a variety of licentious delineations that I dare no more than hint at, I confess, that I, for one, can not exactly see that the gentlemen in question are turning their talents to a very good account. To be sure, they tell me that I am an enemy to the enlightenment of the people, a book aristocrat, entirely void of patriotic ardor. So I am; if my ardor, my republicanism, and my friendly disposition to enlighten the people, can be turned to no better account than this. But if, on the other hand, by some sort of legerdemain of which I was master and which I practised in connexion with the republication of the works of foreign writers, without remuneration to the author, I could transform my disposition to enlighten into an annual revenue of twelve or fifteen hundred dollars, my republicanism into board and lodging, and my patriotic ardor into an easy-running cur-ricule, hung low to the ground, I might perhaps consent to come into this ingenious way of viewing the thing. I might, under the overwhelming logic of these circumstances, be willing to convert my country on the one hand into a sewer or deposite of all the cast off ribaldry and dullness of the old world; or, on the

other, into a great mill or mangle, where books of a better sort should be tortured with an ingenious cruelty, dislocated in every page, broken and fractured in every paragraph, beaten lifeless of all meaning and thrown upon the world mangled and maimed, at the mercy of every chance reader who has a shilling to bestow. At the top of this I might, after pocketing, or boasting to have pocketed on one of these republished productions, the year's wages of an honest man, I might turn upon my benefactor, whose abject and miserable creature I was (for I was fed from his hand), and call him "knave," "fool," and "villain," with a volubility that could only be construed into madness by a generous man. I might even, in the plenitude of a genius for great and noble obliquities, go a step beyond this; if I found any fellow-countryman, one who had happened by some great good or evil fortune to have drawn the same breath with me, rising up, and in the tone and accent of a man, denouncing, without hope of interest or reward, with no unworthy or ungenerous motive, all this as paltry, unjust, and thankless, I might (having the board and lodging, the annual stipend, and the low-hung curricule still in view) proceed to vilify and asperse that countryman by every low art in my power; I might belie his acts, misquote his writings, scorn his friends—I might go even farther; I might ride from office to office in my low-hung curricule, and entreat various conductors of the public press in God's name to do a little vilification in my behalf in their respective daily, weekly, and monthly organs of opinion! I might be spurned from some, cowed down by a manly indignation at others, or, perchance, have an unwilling welcome lent at others. What then? There's my low-hung curricule, my weekly allowance and the board and lodging secured, and I would even go on as I had begun. Nature having denied to me the generous spirit of a brigand or pirate of the main, I will be the tame villain of civilized life, the slasher of native reputation, the stipendiary slanderer of writers beyond the sea!

This is the legitimate spawn of the republishing system; and it is under such auspices that a portion of the American mind is now forming. All along the western border works framed and issued by hands like this are scattered, and make their way, unchecked by purer influences. There, in many places, no native author ever pleads the cause of his country—he ever allowed the pure and great privilege of instilling into the young heart fancies, or hopes, or warnings, that have grown up in his own, under the same free sky.

The evil spirit has there its undisturbed sway! Are you willing that the public service shall be employed in thus deadening and stupefying one mighty limb of the general good? Does it not occur to you that other seed should be sown, other harvests gathered, than that great field now receives and ripens? The

cause of one is the cause of all; and what they derive of unmixed injury in their new estate, we, in an elder condition, draw in, qualified, but by no means neutralized. With them, the false literature stands by itself, a single growth; with us, it strikes down a better plant that strives to lift its head.

No one will be hardy enough to deny, I think, that American literature is virtually stifled under the operation of such a system. God forbid that I should not believe that great souls may be born among us, still—equal to this or any disastrous crisis—able to front it, and addressing it in the tones of high and passionate natures, bid it be stayed for a while. Men who, in the face of disaster and suffering, and the hard oppression of a country that knows them not, and hears them not, by a slow and generous toil, raise up images of greatness and beauty in our midst, not recognised at first by the bewildered eye, but whose silent presence comes at length to be known and felt, and to form a part of the national life. Others, who people the common air with our fellow-citizens of fiction, nobler than truth; and others, again, who, masters of a divine patience, in silence and amid dark discouragements, weave through society and the disorders of a new and troublesome state, the threads of a true belief that bind together and brighten all. These, God be thanked! are so near akin to high spirits of another sphere, that hunger nor thirst, nor the keen wind can stay them from performing the golden circuit on which they are bound—from bearing the glad message they are charged to deliver to mankind.

But it is of another and lower race that I now make question; and I ask, where is the common body of American authors to be found? how are they employed?

I will not say in what cobwebbed lawyer's dens; in what editorial cribs reeking and damped with papers brought from far and wide, piled to the very wall; on what high stools at bankers' desks, the younger brood swarms and makes trial of the daily quill; but of the acknowledged and recognised tribe, whose names run so trippingly from the tongue and form the picturesque tail of the great paper-kite that national self-love sends up from day to day. With one or two exceptions, these refrain altogether from bestowing upon the public regular and complete works, books in one volume or two, carefully elaborated, and claiming the general attention by the patient genius with which they have been wrought out. On the contrary, they are discovered by whoever looks for them, moving rapidly about among certain painted booths—the fashionable magazines—running in and out with their crisp bundles of manuscript, and partaking of such hurried hospitality as the master of the booth can afford.

Sometimes they are placed at the head of the table with a story in three courses before them; others are thrust into a corner to mumble a

sonnet; and others, again, ramble up and down where they choose, regaling themselves out of a neat paper of powdered maccaroni. One gentleman, in other words, furnishes a most moving and pathetic tale of a riband or a lace-veil—another, a light and airy poem of sentiment about nothing; and, another, the delightful history of Arthur Melton, and all his agreeably common-place love passages with the charming young lady heroine, Helen Edgecombe.

This is American literature; the literature of one of the foremost nations of the earth; the literature of a country that gave birth, only a little while ago, to the man George Washington, and issued the Declaration of Independence to the world. Let no one suppose I do not entertain a respect and admiration—proportioned to their merits—for many of the writers engaged in the fashionable magazines, or that I would cast unnecessary censure upon those at the head of the periodical publications in question. They are all common sufferers in an unhappy state of things.

For the evils of that system they may justly point to the law and the public taste; for the advances upon its earlier condition they may take credit to themselves. But none of these circumstances can shut from view the fact that the active, immediate, current literature of America, is to be found at this moment, in certain popular magazines, fronted with fashion-plates, and brought up at the rear with an overwhelming array of authors' names, in capital letters.

This is the condition of a province; of some little, obscure petty state, ashamed to show its head among nations, and capable of subsisting on the very stalks and husks of literature. If it be not an object with us to escape out of this low flat, this Chinese garden of all that is petty and absurd in letters; if we can dwell contentedly there; and if the national energy and dignity of character should fail to yield under the accumulated evils of a system like this, we may fairly count upon ourselves as a nation of tranquil philosophic thinkers, destined to endure for ever—an everlasting model of self-satisfied debasement to the world!

This can not, however, hinder the admission, that this country is, in literature, at the present time, a dependency of Great Britain. It has every mark and characteristic of that servile condition. In the first place it relies for its very literature of amusement—which, if any, should be self-supplied—on a distant country. It pauses before it makes up its historical records for the researches of hostile scholars. It borrows the learning of antiquity through the factorship of compilers, farther distant than the seats and fountains of antiquity themselves. It appropriates without credit, in many cases, its fiction, in some its divinity, in others, its learning; it imitates, without stint, the productions it can not honestly rival. Wanting in the healthy tastes of an original and produc-

tive people, it selects, not infrequently, the worst parts of the literature it appropriates. It has on every and all of these accounts, neither head, nor limbs, nor proper powers of motion, but tumbles about upon the stage of its existence a sort of idiotic monster, whose purposeless look and gaping mouth, craving everything, sets the looker-on into a roar. This it is to be a province and appanage in literature; and it is to this condition that we bind ourselves by law.

Instead of this, what might we, reasonably, have counted upon? Not a mature, harmonious, complete literature; but works at least spontaneous in their growth, and akin, in some measure, to the life of man in a world full of suggestive newness both to eye and spirit. Rugged they might have been as the mountains and cataracts among which they were produced; mere ballads, echoing the cry of enemies withdrawing into the shadow of the wood, or welcoming the advent of the stranger-ship over the rough sea-billow. Something of a lusty strength—the vigor of a manly and rough-nurtured prime—should have seized upon the share and driven it a-field. A certain grandeur of thought, a wild, barbaric splendor it may have been, should have shot forth its fires on every side, and made the wilderness to glow in the forge-light of high passion and thoughts, coultured to and fro with a giant's hand. Not here—not here at least—should the soul of man, in one of its noblest employments, have shown itself cramped, servile, abject, and obsequious to custom. Here, where the free spirit lifts its head and speaks what it will, it should have something more to say.

There are grounds, lying in the very depth of our necessities, from which a hope arises that our literature might have a peculiar force and truth of its own. The very nakedness of our new condition, depriving us of all aid from the picturesque combinations of society, might be reasonably expected to drive us upon a profounder delineation of the inner life; the secret of which seems to have been lost, with rare and distant exceptions, with the great dramatic writers. The number of our newspapers, read so widely, and making known every particular of actual life, would have a similar influence, and compel our authors to a higher and profounder exercise of inventive genius.

And here, too, should authorship, the writing of books, be a noble pursuit. Claiming, as we do, to be a nation of thinkers, it does not become us to degrade the parents and guides of opinion into an abject class. Recognising in them the men who, by sagacious foresight and a wise fancy, widen for us the great future upon which we are entering, we should clothe them in fair apparel and smooth their locks with a considerate hand. Above all rank and station, above presidencies and principalities, should the men be raised, who cultivate and raise up in us faculties of thought, and passion, and will, before which all this show of house,



and temple, and monument, dwindles to a purposeless shadow. A government of opinion lives in the soul of its authors and teachers. Out of that alone it can draw its true life; and beyond that, it holds its existence a prey to swift confusion, to blood, and disorder, and angry riot. Upon them, then, her best influences should be shed; she should strive to spread abroad through their path, peace, bounty, and content, that her own way may partake of a kindred calm.

What results, then, do I expect to flow from the passage of a proper law?

I can not presume to predict, in detail, what these might be, nor the exact form they may assume. They will be, doubtless, great in number; great, perhaps, beyond the sanguine expectations of its advocates. A single remark would embrace, in effect, the purpose of all I could say:—The spirit of wise legislation would act like the creative law, breathing truth and order among the elements of confusion. It will reconcile, renew, separate, and combine, so subtly, that no eye could foresee all its operations. Among the expected changes I would venture to mention:

Firstly; the entire reorganization of the book-trade; at present, as I have shown, in a great measure dismembered and broken. A legitimate and honorable class of publishers would spring up, to take charge as well of the interests of the foreign author, having copyright in this country, as of the domestic writer. An increased interest in the writings of native authors would, of course, be created; and American books would be placed before the public in such form and through such channels as to command their share of attention. The relation of author and publisher would be restored to something like its old conditions: elevated, it might be hoped, by a more intelligent spirit of dealing. Authors and publishers both thrive best, when each can entertain a friendly and respectful regard, on account of accomplishments, toward the other, and feel that they have earnest and noble interests in common. The book-trade, as a business or calling, would rise in dignity, and in its rise would help to raise up literature itself. The rule always holds, I believe, that a race of high-minded publishers springs up contemporaneously with great and popular writers.

Secondly; a greater productiveness in literature here at home, and a greater unity in what is produced. The false appetite engendered and stimulated by the competition and shop-cries of the republishing press, once appeased, many English works of light and worthless character would grow stale on the ocean; and being cast aside, American works, of a better class and spirit, would take their place; the public mind would have leisure allowed it to discriminate, and the good works of domestic origin would be fairly measured with books of their own kind of English growth. The literature of the country, freed from the irregular

and occasional character it derives from the spasmodic effort it now costs author and publisher to get each work before the world, would move forward, with a steady march and a uniformity of production, in each department to which the national talent was directed. The periodical literature of the country, freed from the extraordinary predominance of foreign works, brought before it for notice, constantly jostling aside others of native growth, would rise to a higher criticism and method of judging works of art of all classes. The criticism of the country, dealing at present, in great part, with works from abroad, adopts a careless tone, borrows from foreign journals, and fails to enter upon the subject in the strict and careful spirit it would take if it grew up, side by side with the works it noticed.

Art, too, at present a sad sufferer, with its kinsman, might be expected to awaken and open its eyes once more upon an atmosphere through which light and life began again to move. Apart from its share in the general decay, Art feels the evil influence of the incursions of foreign genius without the regulations of law. The incessant employment of native skill in copying and reproducing, without limit, the designs of foreign artists, would have a tendency to breed a race of imitators, and to inspire our efforts in this kind, with all the petty vices that belong to a school of imitators. A disrespect for genius would be engendered; a base and low style of design and execution fastened upon us; and to all these would be added an unsparing spirit of plagiarism and foul play, as regarded works designed and constructed abroad. Restoring to the arts of design, as of kin to literature, their just rights, the foreign artist, as well as the foreign author, would enter the field on fair terms, and would know that he could protect his interests if he chose.

In the presence of a new and living literature, such as belongs to this soil, much of the criticism that now flies abroad and makes itself clamorous at noonday, would skulk into darkness, and, creeping into convenient retreats, would screech and gibber unheard. The presence of true standards, of manly examples of criticism, and such would arise in a well-regulated state of things, would awe into everlasting silence the brood of maggot-pies, and buzzards, and carrion vultures, that now obstruct the light, and, spreading their obscene, chattering wings before the eyes of the people, shut the clear heaven from the view, and make them believe that darkness is day, and little twilight-walkers, grown men, perchance.

Thirdly; and this is the last I shall at present refer to—the growth of a purer and better tone of opinion at large. It can not be denied, I think, that what may be called a certain heroic unity of thought and act, which marked this country at an earlier period, has been impaired. A certain steadfastness, with which the Republic once marched to its objects, has been, somehow or other, invaded. I

can not believe that the ancient spirit has entirely died out.

The better mind of this country is, in many of its best aspects, unrepresented. Overshadowed by a foreign literature, it lurks underneath, and would, in the course of time, be altogether subdued. Nothing else can supply to a country the place of a literature in maturing and consolidating national opinion. At home a literature is a constant presence, uniting all parts and sections in a general bond. Abroad, the country rises or sinks, seems imposing or insignificant, in proportion to the front its literature presents to the world. A certain vacillation in the acts and sentiments of this country seems to me attributable, in some measure, to the want of counsel from mature minds, living aside from political life, and capable of breathing over the broad surface of the land a spirit of profound knowledge and tranquil truth. Any act by which a characteristic literature was aided in its birth, would help to steady opinion and to mature, a consistent reliance on men and truths here at home.

And now what is it withholds the instant passage of a law, in pursuance of justice, the sacredness of rights not to be gainsaid or argued away, and our own better and nobler interests as a nation of just men, given in some measure to literature and the study of works of genius? The future time, eager and fruitful, presses upon us. If we were assured that we are at this moment enjoying the highest selfish advantage, from this system, there is no worthier time in which to level it to the ground, and vindicate ourselves by a great act of self-denial. Cheaply are its fruits spread before us, it is true; what the value of that cheapness is, I have endeavored elsewhere to show. Cheap in its birth, cheap in its reproduction, cheap in its tendencies, cheap in its results, it is, in Heaven's truth, if rightly regarded. Of its better part, I venture to say, and in this view I think British authors will concur, that in the event of the passage of a law of International copyright, they will be prepared to place their writings before the American people at a price suited to the character and extent of our reading community. This will be their interest, and this, I venture to predict their course. As for ourselves, we will find in this, as in all other cases, that a magnanimous performance of duty will bring with it its own just reward.

The passage of an act of International copyright will, it is asserted, tempt British authors to write expressly for the American market; and this is counted upon as one of the injurious results of a new law. Admit this conjecture to be true, and what ensues? Admit that the temptation of a wide and democratic community of readers presents itself to the imagination of the British author, and that, fired by the prospect of great gain or the hope of a fame echoing from Oregon to the Atlantic, he enters upon the task of inditing books for the Ameri-

can public, can we not understand that his writings, to be acceptable to his transatlantic readers, must address themselves to their republican sympathies and hopes; that he must treat of man according to this new experience of ours; that he must speak of the American future as full of promise to the awakened interests of mankind. Will he, in the meantime, being strong and powerful enough to speak through the darkness and tempest of an ocean, be unheard at home? Being in some measure popular, will not the circumstance that he lifts his voice to a kindred people over the sea, call around him friends and adherents? It will; and America, his great friend and patron (according to this conjecture) will find in him a republican champion on the very shore of Britain, armed to fight her battles, to hold a mailed parley for her right, and to cast before her breast the invincible shield of a loyal defence. A majestic hope certainly; and one which the democratic believer, urged on by whatever zealous belief he may be, should not be in haste to obstruct.

What! a democratic thinker, one who looks before and after for pasture for the eye, faltering at the prospect of a long line of republican writers springing up in the very heart of England to vindicate his country and spread her principles through towers, and huts, and huge gabled factories, where he had despaired of having the heroic voice of a free speaker ever reach! It can not be that he would hug to himself the treasure, so lately dug from the wilderness; that he would hoard and heap up on this side of the Atlantic the massy ingots so lately wrought out in bloody sweat and dinted fields, beyond the grasp of his Saxon kinsman? "Perish," say we, "the base contracted selfishness of such a principle."

It will be, indeed, a proud thing for us to render to the authors of a kindred people this sacred obligation. If to this we can join legislation on a broader and clearer ground than has been yet occupied, recognising all over the broad surface of the globe the indefeasible and perpetual right of the author to his labors, the benignant sun will shine on no other people with a kindlier light.

This great, this permanent honor, is within our reach. Oh, let it not, I beseech you, let it not pass away! The step which bears you forward to make you its master, will be an angel's stride toward a higher and purer civilization than the world has yet known.

I can not believe that the law-givers and teachers of mankind must speak to us always from amid the stifling airs of a distressed condition; cold and shaken with the damps of penury; uttering only in the intervals of pain and hunger, the oracles by which the world is to be guided and cheered onward, in its path of progress. Vexed not always with pangs and the contortions of a suffering frame must these priests and poets of ours echo and answer the

hopes and fears of their race. Something of free sunshine—a sight of the wide and glad horizon, undimmed by tears, a little of prosperity at their hearth-stones, and generous justice in the highways—must be granted them, ere their full hearts can speak forth the truths resident there. Not always bended, and broken, and sick at heart, shall these prodigal children of humanity be driven out to wander over the world, feeding where they can, dropping the seeds of immortal truth on the wayside and by chance : but raised up, inspired anew by a return to the right of their race, the right to possess and enjoy their own, they shall come back to us a glorious company, radiant with hope, and strong in the power to do good !

**THE END.**



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